













LETTERS  
ON INDIA:

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO  
THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY THE  
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LONDON:  
JOHN SNOW, 35, PATERNOSTER ROW.  
MDCCCXL.

**L. C. JOHNS, Printer,**  
**Red Lion Court, Fleet Street**

## P R E F A C E.

THE Author of the following letters, is one of the ablest and most devoted of the Missionaries sent out to India by the LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY. He received his appointment to Benares in the year 1830, and proceeded to that city in 1831, where he has ever since been indefatigably engaged in different departments of Missionary labour.

From his inquisitive turn of mind, and from the great facilities which he has enjoyed at the very source of Braminical influence, his acquaintance with the native character of the Hindoos, and their multiform superstitions and prejudices must be expected to be at once extensive and accurate. His intercourse also, in part, with the Musselman population has enabled him to form a pretty fair

estimate of the position of that people in India. Nor has he wanted the best opportunities of observing what has been carrying on with a view to Christianize that country, especially its Northern provinces: while his own matured experience of the Missionary work cannot but be regarded as fully qualifying him to report on its present state and prospects; the difficulties which those engaged in it have to encounter; the numerous hindrances which obstruct its progress; the errors into which Missionary and other Societies have fallen, and which require to be corrected, as well as those of the laborers themselves, by which their success has been impeded; and the improved plans of operation which must be adopted, in order more efficiently to carry forward the work of God among the heathen.

Into these and many other interesting topics, the Author enters with great minuteness and discrimination, and with a mind ever singly intent upon the attainment of the one grand object to which he has devoted his life—the diffusion of the saving knowledge of Christ in the Pagan world. His remarks cannot fail to enlighten the

minds of Christians generally on the actual circumstances under which Christianity exists in India, and to supply many very important suggestions to those on whom it devolves to direct the operations of the different Institutions, which include that country within the sphere of their benevolent exertions. His observations on the character and languages of the natives of Hindustan, the employment of native teachers, the location of Missions, preaching, translations, schools, female education, and the government support of idolatry are peculiarly valuable, and will doubtless be duly appreciated by all who take an interest in the extension of our Redeemer's kingdom.

For the views and opinions advanced in these letters, the Author alone is responsible. They have been published without the sanction or privity of the Directors of the Society in whose service he is employed. In a few instances he has spoken of men and measures with a freedom which may give offence to some minds; but every allowance will be made by those who candidly take into consideration the circumstances in which he is placed, or who admit his undoubted personal right to

deliver his judgment respecting whatever he believes will retard the progress of the Gospel in the Eastern world.

It is impossible, one should imagine, for any disciple of Christ to rise from the perusal of the present work, or of the Rev. WILLIAM CAMPBELL'S admirable book, entitled "British India"—the one illustrative of the state of things in the North, and the other of that of those in the South—without having his mind penetrated with the conviction, that the claims of the inhabitants of our Eastern possessions on the sympathy, zeal and liberality of British Christians have hitherto been very disproportionably felt. The fact that nearly one hundred millions of our fellow-subjects are living and dying in a state of awful estrangement from God, and without the means of having that estrangement removed—the victims of error, superstition, pollution and horrid cruelty—while we possess every facility of access to them, involves a responsibility the most tremendous that can possibly be conceived. In the providence of Him who "ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and giveth them to whomsoever he will," these millions have

been placed in our keeping ; and by every aspect of their moral condition, by their present degradation and misery, and by the dreariness of their future prospects, they call to us in the loudest and most piteous strains : “ *Come over and help us.*” Let the Christian Church hasten to their rescue. Let us recover as many of the living generation, as by the Divine blessing, we may ; and let us lay a surer and better foundation for the recovery of generations yet unborn. Let us anticipate them with the provisions of eternal life, that, as they spring into existence, instead of drinking in from their infancy the deleterious ingredients of false and debasing systems of religion, they may imbibe the uncorrupted milk of the word, that they may grow thereby unto salvation.

E. HENDERSON.

*Park Terrace, Highbury.*

*April, 1840.*





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# LETTERS ON INDIA.

## LETTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.



MY DEAR FRIEND,

As you wish to know my sentiments respecting the state and prospects of the Missionary work in India, now that I have been several years engaged in it myself, I have purposed to send you a few letters embodying my opinions on several points of importance connected with our efforts, in hopes that they may not be altogether without their use, in enabling you to form your judgment on various things which must necessarily engage your attention.

You will be pleased to keep in mind that my remarks must be considered as applying chiefly to that part of India where Providence has called me to labor, as I cannot profess to be able to speak from personal observation of more than a part of this vast country. The Missions of Northern India, especially those lying along the banks of the Ganges, are those with which I am best acquainted. My knowledge of those of the Madras and Bombay countries, is derived principally from

public accounts, and private correspondence with some of my esteemed Brethren engaged in them.—My observations I wish to be considered as chiefly referring to the state of things in Bengal, and Hindustan or Upper India, though not entirely excluding the other parts of the country.

In reading any thing written in India, it is always necessary to bear in mind, that India is only a name applied by Europeans to a great many countries, peopled by different nations and races of men, as different from each other in languages, habits, and customs, as the various nations inhabiting Modern Europe. The natives do not know what we mean by India unless when we inform them. They speak of countries and nations in which the Hindoo religion is professed, only in the same way that we speak of countries and nations professing Christianity. India as one country is unknown to them, unless that they have an idea of the lands where their religion prevails, similar to what we have when we speak of Christendom.—The Bengali, the Hindustani, the Marhatta and the Tamulian, are as much men of different nations as the English, the French, the Germans, or the Italians.

Hence much of the confusion of European ideas respecting India. Many who have written about it, have set out on the principle of India being one country as England is one, whereas it is only one country in the sense that Europe is one.—For instance, Mr. Ward's Book on the Hindoos is no more applicable to the great variety of na-

tions inhabiting India, than a description of the people of Yorkshire would apply to all the various nations of Europe. Hinduism itself is not one but many. What is called Hinduism in the Madras country, is very different from that which bears the same name at Benares.

It is true they are one to a certain extent—that is, as far as abstract speculations are concerned, but the system as it lives among the people is composed principally of local usages and traditions, varying in every district.—Many of these local customs are set down in most works on India, as essential principles of Hinduism.

Some writers who have been in India will tell you that the Hindoos religiously abstain from animal food, of every kind, whereas the truth is they in general only object to eat beef. It is true some philosophical sects profess to eat nothing which has been possessed of animal life, and with the exception of fish very little animal food is used by the Bengalis, with whom Europeans are best acquainted, but over the greater part of Upper India, that is, over more than one half of the country, not only the lower castes, but even the Bramins freely eat mutton, goat's flesh and game of almost every kind. I have seen large parties of these Hindoos, whom many writers describe as never touching flesh of any kind, without the utmost abhorrence, dine heartily, and that publicly, on mutton, and even on pork without any scandal whatever.

To give a correct description of Hinduism is I believe impossible. It is a huge conglomeration of philosophical speculations, poetical fancies, ancient traditions, morality and immorality, some traces of an original revelation, mixed with ten thousand jarring opinions of hundreds of different sects all jumbled together in confusion and varied into countless forms by vulgar prejudices and local superstitions. Thus some of the Hindoos believe in the unity of God, others in an immense number of gods, all existing as separate beings. Many regard these gods as portions of, or emanations from the Supreme Being, while others think all the gods are merely different forms or names of the same all-pervading Deity. Some are pantheists, others are deists, and not a few think gods and men, and in short all the universe merely an illusion, while some maintain that the creation is only an illusion, but that God is a real and the *only* real existence. The common people confounding all these speculations, have formed a monstrous jumble of all sorts of absurdities, which neither they nor any other mortal can possibly understand. But perhaps it would be more philosophical to say, that they have scarcely any thing that could strictly speaking be called a system of opinions at all, but that they blindly follow a number of customs and ceremonies, some local and some almost universal, originating in speculations, and mythological or local traditions, of the origin and purpose of which they are entirely ignorant.

For the amusement of the mass of the people,

a sort of poetical and dramatic system of religion has been invented by priests and poets. This is embodied in poems and popular songs reciting the exploits of gods and heroes, to whom are attributed, all the passions and vices that ever disgraced human nature. Witnessing dramatic exhibitions of these exploits, visiting holy places, and attending to innumerable ceremonies, and giving gifts to Bramins, forms in short all the religion of the canaille—varied in its features according to the places of their abode, or the tribes or castes to which they belong. I have made these remarks to shew the almost insuperable difficulty of forming a correct opinion respecting the people of this country, and the necessity of keeping in mind that, what is written in India, should generally be taken as applicable to that part of it where the author resides. Should he for example be describing an opinion of the Hindoos, he may unconsciously be speaking of some local opinion, or superstition, as little believed in general in India as in Europe.

The people of India are so various; they profess systems of religion so different, and are influenced by local customs and prejudices so numerous and opposite, that no man whose residence has only been in one province should be taken as an authority respecting them as a whole.

Hence also the difficulty of judging with respect to Missionary plans, adapted to India. We are apt to forget that a Missionary in one district is often engaged without being aware of it himself,



among a people whose characteristics are altogether different from those among whom his Brethren who are his chief advisers are employed, so that by following their plans, believing as he does, that they have the same sort of people to deal with, he may frequently go egregiously wrong. The results of the same plans tried at different places will often turn out to be quite opposite; what is successful in one district may be prejudicial to the cause in another. Thus two Missionaries equally well qualified and acting on precisely the same plans often find themselves very differently situated as to the effects of their labors, and that frequently from the vast difference existing between the characters and circumstances of the people among whom they are engaged. The same takes place with respect to the population of the cities, compared with that of the country villages, the means and agency suitable to the one is not adapted to the other.

It is therefore necessary that in estimating the amount either of work or success in particular Missions, we should not be rash in comparing them with others even in India, as the obstacles to success in one place are not unfrequently next to nothing compared with those to be encountered in another; and it may often be the case, that the most efficient laborers can present least appearance of success, although actually doing much more work, and contributing more to a final triumph, than some of their Brethren who are reaping more

immediate fruit ; perhaps more in consequence of a more favorable concurrence of circumstances than of superior zeal, wisdom, or diligence. But leaving these general remarks I shall proceed in my next letter to treat of some of the principal difficulties which we meet with in propagating the Gospel in this part of the world.

I am, Dear Friend,

Yours Affectionately

W. BUYERS.

Benares, Aug. 1838.

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## LETTER II.

DIFFICULTIES OF THE MISSIONARY WORK IN INDIA,  
ARISING FROM THE STATE OF THE PEOPLE.

DEAR FRIEND,

A principal and very apparent obstacle to the progress of the Gospel in India is the division of the people into tribes or castes, separated from intercourse with each other and especially with foreigners.—This antisocial system is a powerful barrier to the reception of any new system of religion, or usages in general differing from those prevailing from time immemorial in each particular tribe. Perhaps, however, caste has been regarded by many as a more powerful opponent to Christianity than it really is, in consequence of confounding with it the system of families prevailing

in India—which might exist and in fact does exist where the custom of castes is not regarded.—They are, however, so nearly allied to each other that it will be necessary to speak of both in connexion.

The principal difficulty which we meet from caste, is, that it prevents us from obtaining that free and familiar intercourse with the people by which we might have full and fair access to their hearts and affections. We labor among a people with whom we are not permitted to eat or drink, and into whose families we can scarcely find any mode of entrance. We may preach from town to town, and street to street; but from house to house we cannot. There is a line of demarcation between them and us, which we cannot pass. Nearly all our intercourse with them is therefore of a public nature; what they are in private we can with the utmost difficulty find out. How then are we to reach the feelings of their hearts, without which public discourses are dull and inefficient?

Every one who has observed the vast influence of private conversation and social intercourse in promoting religion, must at once see the great disadvantages under which we labor, among a people who regard us as an unclean race, with whom they can neither eat nor drink, nor form any intimate relation. Thus the main springs of all their finer feelings are almost entirely beyond our reach. We are to them barbarians and they are barbarians to us. In consequence of this

estrangement of the Hindoos from all other nations arising from caste, we are prevented from living among them on intimate terms as friends and neighbours, and gaining that easy access to their affections, by the interchange of good offices, which would enable them to understand our principles and motives, so as to produce on their minds a favorable impression with respect to our religion. They are by no means insensible to kindness, but in consequence of caste, every thing must be done at such a formal distance, that it is next to impossible so to overstep the boundaries as to get near their hearts. This is not so much the fault of the people as of the system of caste which leads a Hindoo very naturally to look on a man of another nation, as a being of almost another species, with whom it would be preposterous to think of forming any close relation. This may not in all cases be strictly correct, but there is no doubt that, in the minds of Hindoos in general, there is an idea of incongruity and pollution in the amalgamation of different nations or tribes, that makes it awful for them to think of the sweeping and radical nature of Christianity, which would destroy all distinction of race, and amalgamate all in one body. The same feeling to a certain extent exists among the Musselmans of India, in consequence of their having adapted many of the Hindoo ideas of caste, unknown to the votaries of Islam in other countries.

Were it not for this state of separation from all other people, resulting from caste, it would not

be so powerful a barrier in our own way. It is not merely the difficulty that a native convert has in leaving his caste, that obstructs Christianity, but that of getting access at all to his mind and heart while he continues in it. The difficulty of leaving caste is no doubt very great; but thousands lose their castes yearly and easily regain them. The difficulty is much greater in the way of a man's really being brought to think at all about leaving it,—the habits of thought produced by ages of mental torpor among large masses of men who have been under the influence of an unchanging and apparently unchangeable code of laws, customs, and ceremonies, handed down from time immemorial in their tribes, are such as almost to defy all new impressions. Minds accustomed to ask no reason for any law or practice however absurd, but this that "it is the custom of our caste," are not likely to be easily brought even to think at all on a religion, and a system of doctrine and practice entirely subversive of all that they were ever taught to do or believe. There is no doubt that when the Gospel comes to a man with power, the chain of caste will be readily snapt asunder—but it is difficult to bring a man to think at all of any religion, but that of his own caste, with the least idea of embracing it. Accustomed to see every tribe and caste have a religion, or, at least, religious observances different from each other, the thought of embracing that of another race, only enters into their minds as a thing that is impossible. It is this state of mind which makes caste

such a formidable obstacle, and not the mere worldly difficulties in the way of leaving it, though these are certainly great.

In general every man's caste has its price, and he will give it up for an equivalent, so that getting the Hindoos to abandon their caste, is by no means difficult; but to overcome all the baneful effects of it on their minds, so as to lead them to a candid and conscientious examination of the truth, is a work of which I should despair, were it not for the promises of God, and the fact, that he has already renewed some of them by his Spirit.

The state of feeling and manners produced by caste and all its evil antisocial effects, make it almost impossible for a Missionary ever to become so thoroughly naturalized among the Hindoos as to enable him to obtain full access to their minds, by being himself assimilated to them in habits of thought. A oneness is necessary between the teacher and the taught, but caste comes in as a gulph between the Christian and the Hindoo which neither can pass. In this country the European is a stranger and a barbarian to all around, and however anxious he may be to avoid it, caste draws such a line of demarcation between him and those around him, that he must continue a stranger and a barbarian for life.

Though I regard the state of feeling and prejudices connected with caste as more formidable obstacles to Christianity than the mere difficulty of leaving it, arising from temporal causes, these latter are certainly great and trying. By becoming a

Christian, a man frequently is subject to great pecuniary loss. If he has carried on a business, it is most likely all his customers will abandon him, and even his relations will have no dealings with him. If he has a wife, she is often persuaded by her friends to leave him, and sometimes both wife and children are kept by his father-in-law. A Bramin who was baptized in Benares was deprived not only of his property, and a pension which he formerly had from a native chief, but his wife and child were never allowed to speak to him ; and the law is in such a state that he could have no redress. I have known several inquirers who have long hesitated in making a profession, in consequence of being unable to get their wives and children out of the hands of their relations. Where it so happens, that the whole family resolve to become Christians, these difficulties are removed to a great extent, which shows in fact that caste is not so much in the way as the family system.—A whole family when agreed may, with comparative impunity, brave the power of the caste, especially where there is any thing like a Christian community into which they can be received.

The peculiar construction of families in India forms an obstacle in the way of Christianity perhaps even more powerful than that of caste, with which, however, it is so closely connected, that the two influences are scarcely distinguishable. The caste is merely the *tribe* ; and becoming a Christian leads to the person's being disowned by the tribe or clan to which he belonged ; and this disowning ex-

tends not to the exclusion of the person from all social intercourse, as is sometimes erroneously supposed, but to the interdiction of intermarriage, of eating or drinking out of the same vessels, and of several conventional usages, supposed particularly to indicate brotherhood. The extent of intercourse that still may continue between a Christian convert and the people of his former castes is often considerable. I have seen the relations of a converted Bramin come from a distance and live in his house for weeks; and, on one occasion, the brother of the same man I observed walking the public streets hand-in-hand with him, which among the Hindoos is a peculiar mark of affection. I have known wealthy Bramins invite our native readers to their houses, and serve up a dinner to them in the most kind and hospitable manner, merely themselves abstaining from eating from the same vessels. This act would deprive them of their caste privileges, being contrary to their rules.

The loss of caste as it respects the mere privileges it confers could be easily borne, and in fact is a trifling matter, wherever the christian body is large enough to afford a social circle sufficient to shelter the convert, and present to him objects to gratify the natural love of company, &c. But the hostility of the family is far more difficult to bear. The evils the convert has to endure from this source arise partly from caste; and the principle which guards so strictly the purity of the family from all contamination from other religions, or



mixture with other clans, is no doubt to a great extent, the result of caste ; but still it is not quite the same, and may and does exist apart from it, as may be seen in the case of the Mohammedans, who have much of the same feeling in their families, though not divided into castes.

The patriarchal system of families still prevails to a great extent in India. A man retains a complete authority over all his children and progeny however numerous. When a man marries or comes of age, he does not, as in Europe, become at once the head of a family, unless both his father and grandfather are dead. The paternal roof still covers all. Hence it is not unusual to find an old man absolute lord over a hundred persons. All his sons, their wives and children, and sometimes grand-children, continue under his complete control. What they earn must be brought home, and none of them can remove to another house, unless under imperative necessity, without entailing disgrace on the family. Whatever quarreling there may be, this state of family-bondage continues—all must live together or suffer disgrace.

Now one effect of this system is to deprive a large portion of the population of every thing like independence. A man is sometimes fifty years of age, before he is master of his own house. Though he may have a large family of children and grand-children, he is as much under his father's authority according to usage, as a boy of ten years of age in Europe. If he change his religion, he is banished from the house and all that he holds dear—

## MISSIONARY WORK.

even his wife and children are in many instances retained by the family. Cases occur where the wife is willing to follow him in professing Christianity, but is forcibly prevented from doing so. This family influence exists among sects where the restrictions of caste are not acknowledged, and renders a change of religion almost as difficult in practice, as among the Bramins. Hence multitudes are afraid to listen to our doctrines, who in most countries would be free to act for themselves; but the terror of the family authority so overcomes them, that they scarcely regard themselves as free agents.

In Europe, and perhaps in almost every country, the majority of conversions takes place between the ages of fifteen and thirty. Now during the greater part of this important period, most of the Hindoos are in such a state of domestic dependence and habitual subjection to the will of others, that every thing like free enquiry is almost sure to be suppressed, or if not entirely so, the power of acting on the results of such enquiry, is nearly annihilated. This is no doubt one of the reasons of the general want of success attending Christian schools; for the heathen, and the greater part of converts have been men well advanced in life. This is a serious evil, as it prevents us from having young men fit for being trained as teachers—the older converts being, even in the most favorable cases, far more unlikely to be useful. It is true the system has some good in it as well as evil—for when it happens that the head, or even a prin-

cial member of such an extensive family becomes a sincere Christian, he is likely to bring a great many with him under the sound of the Gospel. But the bad influence of such large families affects the head as well as the members ; for the man who has so many under him, is likely to adhere with a peculiar patriarchal pride to the superstitious usages of his fathers ; and the fact that old men are not easily impressed with new truths, and are naturally more wedded to errors of long standing, sufficiently accounts for the fact that few such can be brought to a candid consideration of the truth.

Yours, &c.

W. B.

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### LETTER III.

SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

DEAR FRIEND,

Another great obstacle to the progress of Christianity is the state of female society. Female influence is every where powerful either for good or for evil. In India whatever power women may have for evil, society has placed them in a situation where they can scarcely get within the reach of good themselves, instead of doing good to others. As the respectable portion of female society is kept concealed, they can scarcely ever hear the

Gospel. And even the lower orders of women, who are permitted to appear in public, never being accustomed to come into assemblies of men, can very rarely come within the sound of the truth.

We have therefore constantly to preach to men alone—and if on their minds any impression is made, their wives are likely to do a good deal to remove it. The whole force of female influence is thus brought against us; and as women in all countries are most superstitious, their prejudices are naturally stronger than those of the men, and as they have few or no opportunities of having their minds disabused, it may well be supposed that they are great obstacles in our way. Within the last year I have known several men who went so far as to request baptism, and even violated their castes by eating with Christians, but after all were persuaded by their wives to remain Hindoos.

Some may be apt to think that female influence cannot be great in a country where women are not allowed to appear in public; where they receive no education, and are in other respects rather harshly treated by the other sex. This, however is a mistake. The Hindoos are generally very much under the influence of their wives, notwithstanding that they are secluded from the public. Among the higher orders this is very much the case. Even political measures are very often greatly affected by the votes of the ladies. Some of them whose faces are never seen by the public,

are well known to be the prime movers in all the affairs of state.

Among the lower orders nothing is more common than to hear men saying that they would have done so and so, but they were prevented by their wives, mothers, or sisters. It is a common precept of the Hindoo shasters, and a continual maxim among the people—never to take counsel of a woman; but the conduct of most of them in actual life shows that this is little else than empty speculation.

Shutting up the women in harems is not natural to the Hindoos. They received the custom from the Musselmans, or rather were obliged to adopt it to secure their women from being seized by these ruthless invaders, to replenish their Zenanas. Notwithstanding their degraded situation, women always had, and still have much influence in Hindoo society; but this influence is one of the greatest obstacles to the Gospel; for we cannot reach their minds to enlighten them, and turn them to the side of truth, while they can in a thousand ways reach the minds of the men to turn them against it. To illustrate the peculiar power of the women of this country in keeping up and promoting superstition, reference is often made to the fact, that they have been the means of converting not a few Europeans both to Hinduism and Mohammedanism. Some of these have been men of rank and education, but have been so influenced by native females that they have not been ashamed to make the most

public profession of faith in the native superstitions.

It is a fact, but perhaps may scarcely be credited in Europe, that English Gentlemen have been known to perform their ablutions in the Ganges and worship the sacred stream, repeating the same prayers in Sanscrit, and using the same ceremonies as the Bramins,—and all this as the result of female influence. Such instances are very rare now, but I have seen such a thing myself.

Had the women equal opportunities with the men of becoming well acquainted with the Gospel, there is reason to believe that a portion of this great influence might be gradually rendered favorable to its progress. They are quick and animated, and appear to have minds susceptible of strong impressions. A native Prince who has got over many of the prejudices of his countrymen, once introduced me to his wife expressly to converse with her on religion, to the study of which she is much given, and I was perfectly surprised at the talents and knowledge of metaphysical subjects which she displayed, though a young woman. This lady of course is far superior to native ladies of rank in general, as she evinced a knowledge of Hinduism, &c. quite equal to that of the highest order of Bramins, but what might not be expected, were the influence of such a woman in her own house directed entirely to the furtherance of true religion. At present, it is only to the lowest and most ignorant and most degraded of the sex that

the Gospel can be proclaimed, and this is an evil which we cannot as yet overcome.

It will, however, gradually lessen as the number of native Christians increase, and many well informed christian women rise up, who will be able to gain access to their own sex, and, it is hoped, draw many of them to the means of grace.

The influence of the Bramins is another great obstacle to the progress of Christianity. This however has been so often noticed, that it is unnecessary to dwell on it at great length.

The Bramins have a thousand ways of holding the people in chains. The endless ceremonies which they have contrived, requiring their own order to officiate, give them access at all times to every family, and make them absolutely necessary to its welfare. While the young Hindoo is in the womb, the Bramin has to be applied to and liberally paid, otherwise there is no hope of his seeing the light. On his birth he is consigned to the influence of the Bramin's prayers, and the virtue of the rites performed by him is the only security for his future happiness. In every state of his childhood, he is the care of the Bramin, and the source of his gain. In fact, in his birth, in his childhood, in youth and in age, in health and in sickness, in prosperity and in adversity, in death, and even in the unseen world, the power of the Bramin is never supposed to forsake him. How much soever he may despise their persons and characters, he finds they

have entangled him in their meshes, so that he cannot escape without becoming an outcast and reproach among men.

Such an influence extending to every man, rich or poor, and connecting itself with every transaction of life, must be a powerful barrier against the truth. It is the natural interest of this numerous and powerful body to retain the people in their present state of ignorance and superstition. Though not united in any formal hierarchy, the numbers and general acuteness of this body make them truly formidable. It is stated by the natives, that, in Benares alone, there are about 50,000 of this race, thousands of whom are esteemed pandits or learned men. Among these there are many men of considerable talent and great wealth. Such an immense body, possessing as they do nearly all that is called learning in the country, easily keep the mass in subjection. The rich especially are their slaves, and the poor, though they often really hate them, are afraid to resist their claims.

The power of the Bramins, however, though still immense, has sensibly declined, and, in a few years more, may be reduced to the level of that of the priesthood of other countries. The causes of this decline are various. Some of them political; some of them are the natural result of the long abuse of influence with which the people are getting tired; and perhaps not the least cause is the exposures so often made of their claims by the Missionaries. The persevering reiteration of



these, though it has not yet led to any extensive open revolt among the people against the authority claimed by the Bramins, has no doubt greatly lowered them in the public mind, and destroyed much of that blind veneration with which they were formerly regarded.

The Bramins are not, however, themselves so inaccessible to the Gospel as some may be ready to suppose. Many of them listen with attention; and, of the converts hitherto gained from Hinduism, a fair proportion have been Bramins. As individuals, they are, all things considered, as likely to receive the Gospel as others; but, while they remain in unbelief, their influence is a most serious detriment among the other castes. Being better educated, they are more able to think and discriminate than their countrymen in general; but then it must be admitted, that they have more interest in opposing the progress of new opinions. The sentiments of many of them seem to be very well illustrated by a circumstance that fell under my notice a few days ago. A man of the writer caste who knows the Gospel well, and seems to be under some convictions of the necessity of professing it, told me he had gone to the Bramins, to state his doubts, and see if they could solve them. They said there could not be one word said against the doctrines of Christianity—no man could refute them—but, they added, “were we to embrace them we should all be ruined!”

It is often the case that the very men who are

most convinced of the falsehood of Hinduism, and have some convictions that Christianity is true, are, from interest and connexions, our most bitter opponents. There are, it is true, large bodies of Brahmins, who have no more direct interest in the support of idolatry than other classes of the people, being employed entirely in secular affairs; but the Pandits and those who officiate at Temples, Ghauts, &c. and live by the performance of various religious ceremonies, are most deeply interested in preserving and even extending the popular superstition. From these we must expect increasing opposition, with our increasing success. "By this craft we have our living" will be the watchword of this powerful party, as long as there are temples and idols in India. To expect the opposition of such persons to cease, or even to become less virulent, would be to look for a greater miracle than has ever been exhibited in the whole progress of Christianity. We have every reason to expect the gradual decrease of their influence over the multitude, but their enmity to the Gospel will continue, till the system with which they are connected is destroyed.

Yours, &c.

W. B.

## LETTER IV.

## DIFFICULTIES ARISING FROM THE LANGUAGE.

DEAR FRIEND,

Another great obstacle to the progress of the Missionary work, is the difficulty of preaching the Gospel in a language so different from our own. There are few men, perhaps, who may not with vigorous application obtain such a command of an Indian language, as to be able to speak with sufficient ease and fluency; and I am not aware of many Missionaries having failed in this respect: any who have turned out deficient in the language, have generally been placed in such circumstances, as were exceedingly unfavorable.

Still it must be admitted that to learn an Oriental language is no easy task. One might with as little labor learn any six of the principal languages of Europe. An Englishman in learning French or German learns only a kindred dialect, spoken by a people professing the same religion and having the same general habits and modes of thinking; but in learning an Indian language he is introduced at once to a *terra incognita*, in which he finds scarcely any thing corresponding with his former ideas and sentiments. His thoughts have not only to be expressed in different words, but he has to learn to speak in altogether a different way. He has often to begin, where he was ac-

customed to conclude his sentence. The very things about which he is, to speak, are in themselves so very different from those to which he has been used, that the dictionary definitions of even simple nouns, often give him no idea of the real objects they are designed to express. As it respects abstract words, the great majority have no words in English exactly equivalent. Take for example the English word gratitude:—it would be difficult to find a term exactly equivalent in some of the native dialects. Not that there are not many words used to express the idea, but not one that in every way answers to the English term. This has led some to make the singular assertion, that the Hindoos have no gratitude, and therefore no word to express it. It might just as well have been said that they never sleep, because some of their dialects have not a word that in all cases is equivalent to the English word sleepy ! The fact is, that their dialects are overloaded with words that express the idea of gratitude in various ways ; but one might not be found that could be used exactly in all cases as our own term.

This great difference in the use and value of expressions, makes the language much more difficult than an European one, spoken by people so like ourselves in all their domestic and social usages, as well as in their feelings and intellectual characters.

The dialects of India are in general rich and powerful. The almost boundless stores of the Sanscrit, and local dialects, supply such a variety

of words and phrases with various shades of meaning, though often apparently synonymous, that great skill is required to apply them correctly. The style of composition in books is so different from the dialects spoken among the vulgar, that it is no easy matter to reach a style that will be generally understood. If the Missionary adopt a low vulgar style, he will be despised as an uneducated man; and, if a high one, his discourses will be above the comprehension of the people. He has scarcely any books except Christian ones, at least in this part of India, from which he can learn such a style as would suit the great body of the people; for almost all books of native production are written in a sort of learned style or dialect, nearly as unintelligible as if it were a dead or foreign language.

We are, therefore, reduced to the necessity of forming a dialect as it were for ourselves—sufficiently polished to be agreeable to the educated, and yet so simple as to be understood by the mass of the common people. Now the difficulty of this is very great: we cannot learn it from books or from conversation—for the style of the former is generally far above, and that of the latter far below the standard required in a good medium of communication. The only way is diligently to compare conversation with books, and to correct and modify the one by the other. Hence we require to study the language in all its extent as written; and by daily and close intercourse with the people, to compare it with what is spoken. In

this way we are able to find out what words or phrases do or do not live among the people, and may gradually be able to learn from books what to reject in the popular dialect as vulgar; and, by means of an extensive acquaintance with the spoken dialects, we may be able to expunge from the half-dead written language, whatever is above the general comprehension.

When Luther wrote the German Translation of the Bible and his other works, he had to form the language for himself: he had an abundance of roots indigenous to the German, but still his reducing the immense and rude mass to such a state, as to render it a suitable vehicle for conveying to the minds of the people the great truths of the Bible, hitherto wrapped up in a dead language, has always been considered one of the greatest evidences of the genius of that extraordinary man. But here, in Northern India, we have a task to perform even more difficult than that of Luther and his coadjutors in Germany. We have a language of boundless resources—a rude and indigested mass—capable no doubt of being modified so as to express every idea of the human mind, but as yet unadapted to the full expression of the great truths of Christianity. The words and phrases have all, as it were, to be recast in a christian mould before they can fully convey the ideas we wish to communicate. Religious terms, principally from the Sanscrit in Hinduee, and from the Arabic in Urdu, often beautifully and even powerfully express christian ideas, as far as etymo-

logy and dictionary definitions can direct us ; but according to the *usus loquendi*, not one in ten of such words convey to the native mind the exact sentiment we wish to teach. Constant circumlocutions must be resorted to—we must give new definitions of words, and epithets must often be attached and new combinations formed, to show that the words are used in a peculiar sense when employed in reference to Christian doctrine. As the truths themselves are new in many cases, nothing but new forms and combinations of speech can adequately express them. It would be very unphilosophical to suppose that the forms and idioms already current in the language, should be found in all cases perfectly sufficient for embodying a large class of truths utterly unknown and unthought of when the language was formed ; but the grand difficulty now is to ingraft on the native stock of the language, a vast number of new, but necessary modes of expression, without in any respect violating its original genius.

It was no doubt difficult to produce that great change on the vernacular languages of Europe which took place, when they began to be cultivated and first used for religious purposes, but not so difficult as the work that must be done in this part of India. There the change was originated by natives well qualified for the work, but here there are no such natives ; but the impulse must be given by men to whom both the language and people are foreign. They have all the labor of learning the words in the original and proper form,

as well as that of adapting them to new ideas and sentiments never before heard of in the country. No one can perhaps have a proper conception of the arduous nature of this task but he who has encountered it. Europeans in general in this country have only to learn a smattering of the language, consisting of words and phrases adapted to business ; into the *penetralia* of it not one in a hundred enters. But the Missionary, to be efficient, should have all its resources at his command ; its roots and all their derivations, of every kind, he ought to be master of, and to be able to turn them, in every manner consistent with the genius of the language, in order to make it fit for the communication of thoughts, feelings and doctrines, and the expression or embodying of trains of argument, both new and strange in a heathen land.

Very few men even of superior education are masters of their native tongue : they are rather mastered by it. They are carried along in the current of their thoughts, by the influence of words and the genius of the language, instead of being able to make the language, without outrage to its idioms, bend to the course of their thoughts. How great then must be the difficulty of a Missionary's course, who has not only to learn every word and idiom of not merely one language, but of a whole class of dialects, and has also to mould and arrange them so as to form out of the ill-assorted materials, an instrument for conveying to the native mind a whole system of new truths ; requiring modes of expression equally new to the



people ! There are few men qualified for such a task ; and no one individual can do more than contribute by his writings and speaking, a mere item towards its accomplishment : the greater number of even talented men can only follow a beaten track with respect to language. The invention of a perfectly new phrase, harmonizing entirely with the genius and spirit of a language, and expressing an idea perfectly new, is a very rare thing, and is in fact a work of genius.

It is not therefore matter of surprise, that much of the instructions in the truths of Christianity hitherto given to the Hindoos, has been communicated in idioms by no means purely native, and, therefore, but imperfectly calculated to impress their minds. This evil is daily decreasing ; but it would have been unreasonable to have expected the first explorers of the language to have been able at once to acquire the power of applying it with effect to Christian doctrine. Many of the Missionaries of the Upper Country where Urdu and Hinduee are used have only been a short time in India ; and the number of men of some experience is small, and being a good deal scattered, it is no easy matter for them to come to a general understanding on the peculiar style and form of language best adapted for preaching and Christian books. It is not to be expected that all will agree on such points, nor is any one likely to be taken generally as a model. Some may be very good idiomatical speakers and yet not be able to succeed well in naturalizing Christian ideas and

modes of thought in the genuine soil of the language.

It is natural for us to expect much in this respect from the native preachers, but even here we meet with considerable disappointment. As they get all their knowledge of Christianity from us—either through the medium of English or Hindustani, they adopt implicitly the technical and other terms used by us, and never think of improving on them. Those of them who know English are worst of all, as they not only bring in a host of English idioms into the vernacular, but even such Greek and Hebrew forms of expression as they meet with in the English Scriptures. The same remark applies even to the best of the Anglo-Indian Missionaries. Some of these though they speak the native language with the utmost purity, as far as business is concerned, yet as all their theological knowledge is derived from English, when they preach or write, especially on doctrinal subjects, they generally give nothing but clumsy literal translations, quite uncongenial to the feelings of the natives.

There is no doubt but, as many Missionaries have labored in Bengal, and not a few of them have been men of considerable talent, a good deal of progress has been made in adapting the Bengali to the expression of Christian truth; but the Hinduee, though even more extensively spoken, has not yet had such advantages. It possesses admissible materials; but little has been done to hew them into such forms as may best suit our great work.

The Hindustani or Urdu, being the language of the Musselmans, and of business in general, is studied by Europeans; but the Hinduee, spoken by the great body of the people, is to them almost an unknown tongue. Scarcely any Europeans ever learn Hinduee. Some of the former Missionaries also contented themselves with the Hindustani, thinking it would answer as a pretty general medium of intercourse; and, before experience had taught them the absolute necessity of both dialects for general usefulness, they were removed or died. Scarcely any, or, perhaps I might say, not one European, has fully travelled the length and breadth of the Hinduee, though the most extensively spoken language in India. Much may now however be expected from the labors of the various Missionaries of different Societies, who have arrived in Northern India during the last few years. We may now hope that the Hinduee will be cultivated and improved, by being used more as the medium of Christian Instruction, for which it is naturally much better adapted than the light and conversational Urdu.

I shall not dwell on this subject longer, as the above remarks will be sufficient to give an idea of the nature of the difficulties we have to encounter connected with the language, and the peculiar sort of effort necessary to overcome them.

It is true, it is not absolutely indispensable that every Missionary should have such a knowledge of the language as I have spoken of, and scarcely any of the natives themselves have so. A man

may preach the Gospel with success with even one-half of the knowledge I have mentioned ; but still it is also true, that, without the labors of a very superior body of scholars and speakers, to mould and form the language, mediocrity men will not in general be able to turn it to good account. The language has to be converted to Christianity as well as the people ; and, though the people, when christianized, will be most successful in thus improving their language, yet it must be admitted, that the present heathen character of the language is a very great barrier between us and the minds of the people. It is not that we cannot learn and speak the language, but that it is itself deficient in adaptation to our purpose. There is no doubt but this obstacle is now in the course of being diminished, and junior Missionaries are daily finding their path becoming smoother. The difference in this respect is already so great, that a young man may now learn to express himself comparatively correctly in the language, on religious subjects, with little more than half the expenditure of time and labor that was once required ; but before the language has been thoroughly imbued with the genius of Christian truth, it will be imperfectly adapted to the work of the Gospel, and, to thus imbue it, will require the labors of a great body of able and accomplished writers and speakers ; the transfusion into it of whose thoughts and feelings will necessarily work a mighty change in its whole texture.

The above I conceive to be some of the principal

obstacles to the progress of Christianity in this part of India, as far as they arise from the state of the people, their religion, customs, and languages. Countless other obstacles to the Gospel might be mentioned, but as they are rather local, or spring out of those already explained, I shall not dwell on them, especially as I shall subsequently have occasion to allude to them. Those noticed will be sufficient to convince you, that the Missionary work in India is one of no ordinary difficulty. They will also in some measure account for the comparatively small success that has attended our labors. These great difficulties are often very discouraging to our minds; but, by the grace of God, we hope to see that they are nothing before the word of the Lord. Faith and patience are now most required in a Missionary in India, for though we have had some few first-fruits, the harvest has not yet commenced.

Yours most truly,

W. B.

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## LETTER V.

### CONCENTRATION OF MISSIONARY OPERATIONS.

DEAR FRIEND,

Most Missionary Societies in this country have fallen into the error of scattering their agents over too extensive limits, to admit of their acting

on any well arranged system of co-operation. A want of concentration has perhaps been one of the chief causes of the little success of which so many complain. Over the whole continent of India from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas, there is scarcely one Mission so strong as, in my opinion, it should be in a country so peculiarly situated. At most of these stations only one laborer is to be found, though almost every Mission is in some city or populous town, or district. Hence not one-half of them can be regarded as permanent institutions. When one laborer dies, there is generally no one to succeed him for a considerable time. Perhaps his successor is to be sent from Europe; and before he arrives, and is able to learn the language, scarcely a trace of the previous cultivation remains. Sometimes it so happens, that just when he begins to do a little, he dies, or is obliged to remove, and thus the work is left exactly where he found it. Stations could be named, where, from this cause, the work has not advanced one step farther than it was twenty years ago, and if the same is continued, may be in a similar state for a hundred years to come.

In the midst of a population such as that of India, one man is completely lost in the mass of Idolatry. His exertions can never command general public attention. Perhaps he labors under difficulties with respect to the language, or the climate prevents him from enjoying his health. Perhaps he is a man not naturally formed for acting alone, though well fitted to bear a part in

a general plan of combined operation. But however well qualified, should he be likely to reap fruit, it may all be spoiled by a fit of sickness putting a temporary stop to his labors; or by some other cause over which he has no control, his place may be left destitute. It has not unfrequently been the case, that even where a church has been formed, it has been entirely scattered by such an event, never more to be gathered.

In England, where every thing is comparatively favorable to the progress of the Gospel—where the greater part of the people are in the habit of attending Christian ordinances, how difficult it is often for an able, pious, and faithful minister, to keep up his church to the same number which he found in it, though every member is more or less an agent in assisting him; how much more difficult then must it be for a solitary Missionary, speaking to a strange people in a difficult foreign tongue, and laboring in an enervating climate, without a single assistant, to originate amidst the mass of idolatry, a church of new converts, and to edify and keep it together, and in the midst of all kinds of opposition to enlarge it by conversions from among the heathen—its bitterest enemies! Is it any wonder that such a work has scarcely ever been accomplished by one man either in India or any other heathen land, and that where it has been so by one of rare endowments, it has generally been dissipated at his death?

With all the advantages of Divine inspiration and miraculous power, the apostles themselves

rarely, if ever, accomplished what some appear to expect from modern Missionaries. They seem to expect that a young man going alone to a city where there is not a single Christian, where he has to learn every word of the language, and to toil often in bodily weakness, without any Christian fellowship and consolation amidst discouragements of every kind, will, nevertheless, in a few years, form a church of pious men, many of whom will be able to preach the Gospel, and enlighten their countrymen. When this result does not take place—as indeed it never has in any strictly heathen land—very great disappointment is expressed; but it seems entirely forgotten that no single apostle with all his miracles, was even so successful as this. The apostles labored in a body at Jerusalem, with all their converts about them, till a broad foundation was laid, and, even after that, they did not go out singly but in bands. The first Mission to the heathen was not undertaken till thousands had believed, and were, from various causes, scattered abroad, so that individual believers were to be found in almost every city where the first Missionaries entered. The Apostle Paul, so far as we are informed, never founded a church by his own individual efforts, unless perhaps at Athens. He was the intrepid leader in almost every instance of a band of devoted preachers, many of whose names are mentioned, who seem never for a day to have abandoned the infant churches. They moved on like a conquering army, but secured every conquest behind them.



Hence, while the first churches were generally formed by the united labors of a band of Missionaries, they were immediately furnished with pastors and teachers &c., for internal edification; either from among themselves, or the Missionary band to whom they owed their formation; and by whose constant visits they continued to be nourished and protected, during the period of their infancy.

That a single Missionary should so far succeed in India as to form and preserve a church amidst heathen influences, unless where he labors in the immediate neighborhood of other brethren, is more than should ever be expected, and certainly more than has ever been as yet accomplished. The difficulties with which such a laborer has to contend, cannot well be conceived by any one who has not been placed in similar circumstances. He is like one witness brought forward to give testimony on one side of a great question, while there are thousands opposed to him, and consequently he meets with little or no credit. In the Apostolic missions, the greatest stress was laid on witnessing to the truth; while we depend more on arguments from external and internal evidence. Now, as to the greater portion of external evidence, especially historical, it is worth next to nothing, so far as the great mass of Hindoos and Musselmans are concerned. In their view, the history of Europe and Western Asia is just as fabulous as their own absurd Mythology is in ours. The

works of Lardner, Paley, &c. are, to them, perfectly useless. If we speak of miracles, their gods and holy men have performed, and do perform, such without number: and the books in which the historical evidence is contained, will not pass with them as possessing the least authority. With internal evidence alone, can we make any thing like an impression. The moral beauty of the Gospel, its adaptation to the state of man, and its power over the heart and conscience, are the principal proofs of its divinity tangible to the heathen; but this internal evidence ought to be accompanied by the direct testimony of actual witnesses who have felt its power, and can testify its truth both by words and actions. A body of regenerated men, acting in all the relations of life, on the heaven-born principles of the Gospel, is the most powerful argument of its truth and divine origin; and when these men are not only able to embody the truth in their lives, but to proclaim and expound it with the energy peculiar to believing men, who speak from the heart, the results cannot fail to be great; and when their number is such as to shew the same operation in a great variety of individuals, all teaching the same doctrines, the heathen cannot fail of perceiving an irresistible force in their united testimony. It is in this manner that the bulk of sincere believers in every country are converted; it is not by historical argument, but simply by the truth, which they believe to be the word of God, because it is declared to be so by men

who are more learned than themselves, and whom they know to be possessed of unimpeachable goodness, integrity, and benevolence. It is the word of God which they believe; but previously to the experimental evidence from its actual purifying influence on their own minds, they receive it as such on the authority of the coincident testimony of men who constantly assert its divine character, and, by speech and example, declare its power of renewing the heart and life of those who receive it. Hence it naturally follows, that the greater the number of consistent witnesses to the truth of the Gospel, concentrated to give their testimony at one place, the more convincing will be the evidence. Twelve witnesses, all agreeing in the same statement, cannot fail of producing an impression on an audience, where from the unwelcome nature of the facts, one would scarcely have been listened to. Such is the case in a city or neighbourhood, as it respects the Gospel. If there is only one preacher, he is lost and unheeded; but if it is known, that ten or twenty men of intelligence and blameless lives, daily proclaim the same doctrines, and live according to them, it is almost certain, that an impression, more or less serious, will soon be produced.

This I conceive to be one of the strongest reasons for making every Mission to the heathen, especially in India, a large body, to bring the Gospel home to the people, with a weight of united testimony such as must arrest attention. Forty or fifty Missionaries of consistent Christian cha-

racter, and other suitable qualifications, especially if connected as one society, would be an overmatch for the thousands of Brahmins in Benares. In their preaching, writings, conversation, and daily intercourse with the people, they would give a practical form to the moral and experimental evidence of Christianity, which could not fail to affect the native mind; while they themselves, and their families, would form a nucleus, around which a Christian church might be collected.

Some may think the proposal of locating so many Missionaries in one large city very extravagant; and I am well aware of the immense difficulty of obtaining either men or money, for such an undertaking; but after all it would only be a repetition of the experiments tried with so much success in the South Seas. The first band of Missionaries placed in the small island of Tahiti consisted of eighteen, while the population did not exceed 16,000, so that there was a Missionary for at least every nine hundred. Now the population of Benares, taking the average of the different censuses, is not under 500,000, exclusive of the surrounding villages; so that were there fifty Missionaries, there would not be one to each 10,000. But their labors might extend to the surrounding villages, so as to take in a population of several millions. Thus, judging by the number of heathen, there would not, after all, be one laborer where Tahiti had ten. Such a body of men, however, once formed, would have an immense influence, and would soon be able to bring

forward native agency of various kinds, and to put such a powerful system in operation, that it would be impossible for the public mind to be long dormant. Idolatry would certainly before long, be shaken to its base, and were it once so in such a place, it is impossible to calculate the effects on other parts of the country.

It was in this way that the Roman Catholics accomplished so much in spreading their system of nominal Christianity in different parts of the East. Instead of a solitary individual or two, they settled whole colleges of Missionaries in one place, and the result was great. The simplicity of our means do not remove us from the influence of similar principles. Indeed wherever the Protestant Missions have been conducted on the plan of concentration, they have also been almost invariably successful.

Perhaps the best plan would have been for no society to have above one independent mission in this country, or, at most, one in Northern, and another in Southern India. These stations might have been in the largest cities, where each would have commanded a whole province. The principal labors of the body should have been directed, in the first place, to the formation of a church among the heathen, in imitation of that first formed in Jerusalem, extending their exertions gradually to the neighbouring towns and villages, and occasionally, even to a considerable distance. By thus remaining at one centre, they would have been able to collect all the converts into a distinct and united

body, and to bring forward native preachers, and pastors for any church that might branch off from the original one. It would perhaps be better that no European Missionary ever became, strictly speaking, the pastor of a native church. His office should be that of an evangelist, to preach to the heathen, to arrange churches, direct them during their infancy, in finding pastors, settling disputes, and, in short, aiding them in every matter, till they came to some degree of maturity. In the infantile state of such churches, much European aid and instruction will long be required, and even the best of the native preachers have innumerable deficiencies; but still it is better to employ them as much as possible: for, making Europeans pastors, for any length of time, of native churches, is the most effectual mode of perpetuating an unnatural state of tutelage, which ought, as soon as practicable, to be abandoned.

Were the missions placed on this extensive scale, we should soon overcome many of the difficulties we now experience, in regard to the forming of churches, and raising of native agents. Were ten or twelve Missionaries in the first instance to devote their labors to the raising of one church, they would, it may be expected, be able to bring it to a state of considerable maturity in the course of a few years, so as to form a good basis for all their future operations. All their schools would be connected with it, a vigorous system of teaching for the converts could be adopted, young men educated in a superior man-

ner, and such as turned out suitable, engaged as laborers of various kinds, under the immediate eye of the Missionaries. As soon as a number of converts in any place too distant from the original church, were found to exist, they might be formed into another, and some of the most experienced of the native preachers might become their pastors, assisted by the constant visits and counsels of the European brethren. The circle thus formed would widen in proportion as the converts and native agency increased, and there would be no danger of such a mission being broken up by casualties, as the death or removal of one or two would only slightly impair its efficiency.

Though the Missionaries were thus concentrated, there would be no necessity for any such close contact as would merge them in any thing like institutions such as the Moravians form. As to private affairs, they might have as little connexion as ministers at home. No other system of arrangement would be necessary, than that required in London between a body of ministers who agree to supply a certain number of places of worship, some statedly, and others occasionally. The only difference would be, that at first the converts at all the different stations within reach, instead of being formed into a great number of insignificant churches, would be collected into one at the most convenient spot, which would thus more speedily become a strong and regular body, complete in all its arrangements. When this church becomes large enough to be able to spare

a number of members, others might gradually be formed on the same model at such places as are most convenient to the members, and present the greatest prospect of good being done.

The greatest advantages would result to the converts from being brought together. They would be encouraged to perseverance by the support and countenance of others ; a more complete and suitable system of instruction could be kept up ; and all the ordinances of the Gospel would be more regularly attended to, and, with a spirit more exciting and edifying than in little scattered societies of eights or tens, such as the infant churches at most of our stations still are. The appearance of such a church would be far more interesting to the heathen, and better calculated to give them correct ideas of the Christian ordinances and discipline, than the meagre and heartless exhibition of them, which we are obliged to present in our weak and scattered state. Such a central church, having most of the Missionaries and their families members, all laboring to increase and extend it on every side ; having in connection with it twenty or thirty preaching stations, schools for both Christian and heathen children, and various other means for spreading the Gospel in active operation, would soon, by the Divine blessing, become a model for all future churches in the district. Where the body of laborers was so great, no ground would be lost by changes ; and the influence, bearing in so many ways on one city, would be so powerful, that idolatry must give way, as it has always done



when brought into real and close contact with pure and well organized Christianity. Out of such a mother church, laborers among the heathen, and pastors for future churches, would be raised, and thus, from one point, the word of God might sound forth over all the surrounding country. A strong lodgement would thus be effected at one place, from which all future operations would be conducted with the greatest advantage. To the Missionaries themselves the benefit would be immense. The juniors would labor by the side of the seniors, and have all the advantage of their experience; and the social intercourse of so many engaged in the same work, would prevent that oppression of spirits under the load of solitary and overwhelming responsibility and discouragement, through which many a Missionary sinks into a premature grave. Those of our brethren whose whole time has been spent in a large and harmonious circle of brethren and friends of different denominations, can have little idea of the overwhelming hopelessness of solitary Missionary labor in a large heathen city. It is almost too much for human nature to bear. I have seen the death agonies of one of its victims,—one, who, as a Christian, a gentleman, and a scholar, has had few equals in the Missionary field; but his splendid talents and attainments were all sacrificed to enable a Society to boast of having one station more. I will say nothing about the bitterness of the system as experienced by myself; but if any one will visit four or five of the stations where solitary

Missionaries are now laboring, he will read their history in the morbid sensibility and nervous eccentricities superinduced by the disappointments and dreariness of the almost hopeless undertaking in which they are engaged. They are beating down a mountain with a watch-maker's hammer, and no wonder that some of them have begun to despair.

It is vain to think that ever India will be evangelized by Europeans. All they can do is only to plant the first churches. Our great object ought therefore to be as soon as possible, to raise several large churches in the most influential places, which may serve as nurseries for native ministers and Missionaries. Great efforts should be made to bring such congregations to maturity, that we may have a body of people capable of forming a society separate from the heathen, and whose children may be brought up on Christian principles, and receive a good education, so that from among them we may be able to find agents for enlightening their countrymen. But as long as Missions are so weak, and so far scattered, no regular body of converts is ever constituted. Where churches are formed by the labors of only one man, they are so small that they can never be depended on, and as the converts have scarcely any thing like Christian company, they often fall off. A thousand casualties ruin such feeble congregations, and even where the station is regularly kept up, it may continue for ages in the same low and discouraging state. In the mean time, Christ-

ianity becomes contemptible in the eyes of the heathen, who are confirmed by seeing the weakness of the new religion ; whereas, by studying concentration, though we should have the name of few Missions, we should have more real Missionaries, and be able to attack the common enemy with a force capable of making an impression, and our missions would be strong, effective, and permanent bodies, whose labours would every year tell more and more, till the country felt their effects from one end to the other.

The foregoing remarks in this letter were published some months ago, in the Calcutta Christian Observer, and, I have reason to believe, met with the general concurrence of the principal part of the Missionary body. Some objections were, however, made in another periodical, partly by the editor, and partly by two anonymous correspondents. As I did not consider those objections of much weight, as bearing against my views, which the writers seemed not to have apprehended, I did not make any reply at the time, but, perhaps, it may be as well to notice some of them now.

I may observe, in explanation of what I have written, that the Missionary policy which I have recommended above, is professedly designed for societies purely Missionary, and not for any particular sect who may have adherents already in different parts of the country ; or who may consider it a matter of much importance to propagate their particular sentiments respecting Christian

doctrine or discipline among real or nominal Christians of other communities. For instance, our Baptist Brethren have always acted on the principle of extending themselves as widely as possible; and, as they profess a twofold object, that of evangelizing the heathen, and that of reforming professed Christians, whether European or native, by bringing them over to what they think a more spiritual system, especially as it regards the ordinance of Baptism, it no doubt suits their object better to form a number of small missions, so as to take in as many as possible of those stations where Christian communities already exist, but on what they consider an unscriptural basis. There is an obvious distinction between the policy required for promoting the objects of a body who have nothing in view but the conversion of the heathen, and who are not particularly concerned about the precise forms of Church government &c., that may ultimately be adopted by the converts, and that of a body whose position is very different. The plan of concentration is clearly intended for such societies as the London Society; the American B. C. F. M.; or any other body whose operations, unless accidentally or occasionally, are purely Missionary. The position of the Church Mission Society in this country, though entirely Missionary, perhaps warrants a greater deviation from the concentrated plan than usual; while, I believe, the general desire of that Society is—to concentrate.

In this country, the fact that there are chap-

lains of the church of England at almost every large European station, where there is also generally in the neighbourhood some large native town, makes a number of such places naturally a sort of Mission stations of the Church, as the pious residents, where there are such, sometimes in conjunction with the chaplain, set up a school, and are anxious to have some aid from the Society. The pious well-wishers of the cause are generally churchmen; and as the Society can thus get a good deal of local aid, it is induced often to grant Catechists, or sometimes a single Missionary, merely to co-operate with these friends. Another cause of the Church Society being at first, and even now, induced to scatter its laborers, especially up the country, was the desirableness of providing religious instruction for the native wives and families of European soldiers who are nominal Christians.

These circumstances, though perhaps not sufficient to justify any great scattering of laborers, no doubt would excuse a comparatively greater extension of the Church, than of the London Society, the latter of which does not belong to any particular denomination, and is not connected with the European community in the same way as the former. The London Society does not aim at the formation of any distinct body among the Christian community, either native or European, and therefore has nothing to do but to adopt the most direct plans for evangelizing the heathen, and collecting the converts together; leaving to

future circumstances and the conscientious views of the natives themselves, the form or forms which their churches may take.

It has been objected to the plan of concentration, that it narrows the field of exertion, and that the occupation of only a few places would leave all the others in a destitute state.

In this objection there are two erroneous assumptions. First, it supposes that we propose to put more men into any given field than there is work for; and, secondly, that by forming at great and important places, large central missions, we should defer for a very great length of time the evangelization of the smaller places. ‡

With regard to the first, it was never proposed that large Missions should be in any but great cities; and the number proposed, even taking the very largest, would not, were those places christianized, be in any way adequate to afford them sufficient instruction, in all the different ways by which such instruction must be given in this country, where schools are to be taught, books translated or written, many secular affairs of the converts attended to, besides preaching, conversation with the heathen, journeys for itinerating undertaken, and a great variety of means employed, before Christianity can receive a real soul and body, instead of being as now, in the eyes of the people, little else than a shadow of abstracts speculations.

It is not meant to say that we should make any permanent arrangement for occupying and cultiva-

ting only one part of the country—far from it, all that is meant is ; “ Let us make good our ground.” Let us seize a commanding position where we may be able to make an impression, train our soldiers, and prepare our commissariat, before we separate into little parties never to meet again. As far as the effectual supply of the smaller stations and the open country is concerned, I feel convinced that the concentration plan would reach them sooner than the other, because it would never reach them at all, till it did so by suitable means, instead of a mere nominal supply. By the plan proposed no newly arrived Missionary would ever be in charge of a separate station, and no new station would be taken up but where an adequate supply existed. Experienced men would always be the harbingers where an advance or an extension might be thought desirable ; while the juniors would be gradually acquiring the necessary qualifications, by attending to such work as they could manage at the older and larger stations. No other concentration is therefore meant, than merely our not taking in more ground than we can, in some imperfect degree, bring under cultivation. Whenever a laborer can be spared, well fit to make a lodgment in the still uncultivated jungle, let him by all means be sent to the nearest spot likely to reward his labor, with all the aids and facilities, which the more mature station may be able to give him.

In a new colony, where all the first settlers scatter themselves indiscriminately over the whole

of an extensive desert, each choosing a location for himself according to his own opinion or whim, —not waiting till they have built towns, made roads, explored the country, and carefully formed plans of settlements, with proper regard to the facilities of commerce, &c. ; what is to be expected but the defeat of the scheme? or, if ultimately successful, that the infant colony will require a great many years to overcome the difficulties of its situation, whereas a well chosen and regular plan of clearing the country and forming a complete system of policy, would not only lead to earlier prosperity in the settled districts, but to an earlier cultivation of the whole country.

Thus I have no doubt it would be with well-conducted large central Missions. They would push forward ultimately a far better trained agency both native and European, into all the districts of their respective provinces or circles of the country, so that, in the end, the delay would not be so great in forming churches and giving Christianity a living form.

The objection, that we ought to have mercy on all parts of the country alike, and supply every place, supposes that we have the means of adequately supplying a great many places ; whereas it is clear we have no means to do so, and never can have, till thousands of native preachers have been raised, and hundreds of thousands converted to Christ. The most quick and efficient way of raising up a good native agency must now be looked on, as the most effectual way of carrying



on the work. To me it seems a matter beyond all doubt, that strong Missions are far better adapted for this purpose, than it is possible for small ones consisting of one Missionary to be.

It has been objected, that not a few instances have occurred, in which one man placed at a station, has been more successful than some Missions have been, where there have been several laboring in conjunction.

This objection, however, is not exactly founded on fact. Most of the Missions in Northern India out of Calcutta, have, till lately, consisted of one man each, but it is not true, that any one, even the most successful of these, has had so many converts as the Mission of our Society in Calcutta, in which the operations of several laborers have been conjoined. Till within two or three years, there has scarcely been such a thing out of Calcutta, and Serampore—as even two Missionaries of moderate experience, laboring at any one station for any length of time. To take the success of one or two very laborious and experienced men of twenty years standing or upwards, and compare it with that of a Mission where two or three young men have been laboring, acquiring the language and a little experience, for three or four years, is not a proper way of arriving at the true state of the case, while we have such cases as the South Seas, Hawaii, Ceylon, Tinnevely, Travancore, &c. in all of which a great concentration of effort has been manifest; for even where there has not been a very great force of Europeans,

there has been a large combination of native agency, under the very best and most experienced European direction. But even were it a fact, that some have singly done a good deal, it does not prove that had there been two good Missionaries at the same station, even more than double the work might not have been effected. Take for instance the Rev. A. Bowley of Chunar, one of the oldest, most laborious and successful Missionaries in the country. Single-handed he finds daily difficulty. When he goes to labor among the heathen, his native church suffers, his schools suffer, and the improvement of the converts stands still; and when he stays at home, laboring entirely among these, the work of conversion from the heathen is entirely suspended. He himself feels, that, without aid, he can go but little further than he has done, and, at the same time, has no experienced Brother into whose hands the work may gradually be committed. The great evil attached to single-handed success, is that it too often dies with the instrument of its production; a young man newly arrived from Europe, is put perhaps to succeed an experienced man who has done much, and put things in a train for greater efficiency. The most likely thing a young man in such circumstances will do, is to upset every thing that has been established.

Young men when they come out, as they know nothing of the work or the people, the difficulties that have been overcome, and those that still remain to be encountered—fall into sad mistakes

from ignorance of every kind; but still having naturally some theories of their own own—theories fine in themselves, but tried over and over by almost every Missionary in succession, and found useless—if they are placed by themselves, are very likely to throw all back again for a number of years, and go through the same course of disappointment with their predecessors. This they cannot do in large Missions, as no burden of consequence is thrown on them, till observation and experience have made them able to bear it; and they gradually, as they become capable, slip into all the duties, and come under the responsibilities of the work, without having run a painful round of disappointed hopes from vain experiments. At one-man-stations the work sometimes goes on encouragingly and then stops—the shepherd dies, and his few sheep lose themselves in the wilderness—a successor at last comes, a raw youth—he meets a few of the stragglers, but most are gone—he knows not how to manage what remain, and he has years and years to labor, and after all, perhaps, does not succeed in bringing things into the state in which they were before he came.

The only other objection to the plan of concentrated Missions which I shall notice is this:—That where a considerable number of men are employed in conjunction, there is great danger of disagreement. One objector writes to this effect, that “In smaller Missions it is often difficult to preserve harmony, how much more so in a large body.”

This objection is certainly so little in accordance with all human experience, that it is rather surprising that it ever should have been urged. It is notorious that all small societies are most subject to petty jealousies, backbitings, idle gossiping, &c. which are generally the cause of disagreement among coadjutors in one work, much more than any differences of sentiment or public measures. Ten men are much more likely to act in concert than two or three, as they have always more or less the power of quashing by the general opinion of the majority, any little risings of hostility between individuals; and the responsibilities being borne by so many, do not produce such a sensitiveness on every point of policy, as is most likely to exist in very small bodies, where the responsibility is thrown on one or two. The Mission of the London Society in Calcutta, is the largest local combination of laborers in the country, conducting their Missionary affairs on their own responsibility alone, and yet no disagreement has ever taken place, either in the body generally or between individuals, so as to interfere with the harmony of their plans.

The only affair involving a painful difference of opinion was between the whole body on one side, and a junior brother on his arrival from England, not understanding the relations of his office to the Society, opposed the general will of the Brethren, which led to a very painful disagreement.

But the fact that one of the largest Missions in India on the plan I propose, has carried on ope-

rations for more than twenty years without contentions, while no other Mission has been acting on a concentrated plan with a regular organization, strongly proves my position that a large and well organized body is much more likely to co-operate successfully and harmoniously than small isolated Missions of one or two. The greatest trouble has always arisen in managing the smaller Missions; the large ones who can take on themselves their own responsibilities, are in every respect more easily managed, and are far more comfortable to the laborers engaged in them.—I have not heard of any other objections to the plan deserving of consideration.

Yours affectionately,

W. B.

## LETTER VI.

### LOCATION OF MISSIONS.

DEAR FRIEND,

It has been remarked of the English, that, in choosing the sites of their foreign settlements, they have generally fixed on the most unhealthy and inconvenient places that could well be found.

Whether or not this charge is correct, it is not for me to enquire, but I have often thought that, in India, there was too much ground for it. The Indian capital, in particular, is situated almost at

the extremity of the country, in a low marshy and unhealthy district that formerly had but little connexion with the rest of India, and though not unsuitable for mere mercantile purposes, for which at first it was exclusively designed, it never had any thing to recommend it for other objects, nor does it exercise on the rest of this vast country, that influence which a well situated and extensive metropolis might be expected to do. These remarks will apply more or less to both Bombay and Madras, as well as Calcutta. Since they also are not placed in such central and commanding positions, as might be naturally calculated to give them a powerful influence over the whole country. The earlier especially, and even the present operations of Missionary Societies, naturally were, and are directed by the localities of the European stations; and, consequently, if those stations have been badly chosen, have suffered. A greater expenditure of human life has taken place, and, in my opinion, a greater number of obstacles have been presented to the work, than otherwise would have existed, by Missionaries being settled at random, in spots radically unhealthy, and in themselves not the most adapted for Missionary labor, but chosen as European stations, for various causes peculiar to the earlier state of British affairs in the country.

In the infancy of Missions in India, the plan of locating Missionaries almost entirely at European stations could not be avoided.—For some time the Government would not have allowed them to labor among the people, unless partially in the

neighbourhood of places where European influence was paramount. Nothing for long could be done without the countenance or favor of some local authority or person of influence, while the localities of the country, as well as the character and disposition of the people were comparatively unknown. It was necessary that the Missionary should remain at such stations, where his character and efforts might develop themselves under the eye of the government, at that time disposed to form the most unfavorable opinion.

Such policy is not however now necessary, as the whole country is open to us, and I think many reasons exist in favor of even preferring the large towns, districts, and villages, at some distance from European settlements, to the locations of English troops or the emporiums of European commerce.

Had Europeans in this country been intimately acquainted and connected with the natives so as to have all that moral influence over them which one class of society exercises over another in most countries; they might very probably have been the first and principal objects of attention, so that through the medium of English churches we might effectually reach the native mind.

But in the present state of things, Europeans are not inhabitants of the country. At the presidencies of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay in particular, a great many of them have no connexion with the natives whatever. They are ignorant of their language, religion, manners, and customs. All they know of them is generally

through the medium of their servants, who are of the lowest and most ignorant classes—who have added the vices of Europe to those of India. Even with these they can scarcely exchange an idea, unless on the most common business of life. Moral influence is almost entirely out of the question, where both parties for the most part look on each other with disgust.—Europeans living at stations in the interior, are generally much better acquainted both with the language and habits of the natives, but to very many even of them, the above remarks will fully apply.

If the English remained in the country, many of the evils now existing might be gradually overcome; but they are, in general, only strangers who stay for a few years at most, and leave the country, nearly as ignorant of it as when they first landed on its shores.—Of course there are many exceptions, but in general the Europeans of the presidencies, in particular, continue so purely European, in all their ideas, feelings, and associations, that though they were never so well disposed, they are really incapable of doing good among the natives. To labor, therefore, among Europeans, with the view of thus reaching the natives through them, is a work not likely to succeed, while the hindrance which it presents to actual Missionary work is great.—This in general may be seen in its effects at those stations where from the peculiar state of society, the Missionaries voluntarily or involuntarily have had to devote much time to English; and even where much labor has been



expended on a native population, mixed up with an European one, the success has been little compared with the amount of exertion.

In Calcutta the number of converts is very small, though there has been perhaps more regular Missionary labor bestowed on the city, compared with its population, than on any other part of India. Not a few of the Calcutta Missionaries too, have been, and others perhaps now are, the best qualified and most laborious in India.— Besides the direct efforts of these laborers, large and flourishing English schools and colleges have long existed, in many of which Christianity has been zealously taught, and a great variety of other means for spreading the Gospel has existed, and yet the effect as to real Christianity has been exceedingly small, compared with the apparent amount of labor. I refer entirely to the city of Calcutta, and not to the villages around, for in the latter a very encouraging degree of success has been obtained by most of the Societies. This exactly illustrates my opinion; as these villages are entirely separated from European society, the success in them tends to show, that it is easier to work our way among an unmixed native population, than among those mixed up with Europeans.

The conduct of the great majority of Europeans in India, though of late years much improved, is but too often such as tends to disgust the natives at Christianity; and when Missionaries are much mixed up with them, they find their doctrines called in question more on the ground of their

supposed bad effects on our own countrymen, than on any other account—but where there are no Europeans, the doctrines are often listened to with more candor.

The native population of English settlements is also in itself very inferior, in general, in both character and respectability, to that of towns and cities purely Indian. It is composed, at least a great part of it, of the scum of the whole country, and is continually fluctuating. Very few of the old respectable native families are to be found at these places; and hence, though there are many rich natives congregated around the European stations, from various causes there are not many of them permanent residents belonging to those families, who are the lineal descendants of the influential classes of former times, and who are naturally looked up to by the people as their leaders and examples. Indeed the greater part of the native inhabitants of these places exhibits much of the ephemeral or mushroom character of the European part of the community. They are brought together by fortuitous circumstances, and are soon in a similar manner dispersed. Such a community having no adhesive principle, is but ill suited to receive any deep or lasting impression. It is like the sand on which the traveller may write his name, but when he returns no trace of it remains. To this is superadded the fact, that it is composed almost entirely of those who come together only from the love of pleasure, or the desire of gain, and whose minds are consequently

in a very unfavorable state for the attentive consideration of religious truth. It may easily be believed, that, among such a population, the prospect of great and speedy success must be less than where society is more fixed and indigenous. The same holds true even in a greater degree with respect to mere military stations, where there is no great native town or city independent of the English settlement or camp. A good many of these are, however, in the immediate neighbourhood of some large city, which still continues to retain, with little change, its original Indian character; while in and around the military cantonments a mixed sort of town springs up, generally extending over a considerable space, and filled with soldiers, pensioners, &c. native and European, Portuguese of the lowest orders, camp-followers of all descriptions, and in short troops of the refuse of the community both male and female. There is indeed in all such places a sprinkling of tolerably respectable people; and, where there are courts of justice, there are various classes of government officers and lawyers, generally a vile and selfish race, the very last to open their hearts to any thing good or true.

Such are the stations at which not a small portion of Missionary labor has been expended, and where a considerable number of the Missionaries have been located. It is true, even those Missionaries located at military posts, have by no means confined their labors to them; but I have little doubt that their usefulness would have been

greater, had they been so situated as to bring the principal force of their efforts to bear on the more steady and unmixed part of the community.

The country is covered with large towns and villages where the population is not in any respect migratory, as at military stations, and where, as yet, the people have not been so prejudiced against the Gospel, by familiarity with the worst specimens of our countrymen. At the same time, it must be remembered, that the stations of our troops are by no means the most populous, nor do they at all present such facilities for undivided labor in direct Missionary work, as some of those do where scarcely an European is to be found; while the prejudices of those who have seen such perverted exhibitions of what they are led to regard as Christian character, are far more inveterate than those of the mere heathen, who hear only our doctrine and see the regular lives of its preachers.

It is true that an European station has much to recommend itself to our feelings. There we are still among our people. We may have society and many other comforts which cannot be found in a town merely native; but few real Missionaries will put these things into competition with the advantages of more direct and extended means of usefulness. At European stations also the temptations to trifling are great. Society will require some degree of attention, and the company in a military camp, is often not the most suitable: there is sometimes much danger that its unfavorable influence on the Missionary may be greater

than his favorable influence on it. It is true, some of our brethren have been very useful at such stations among Europeans; but it has sometimes been at the expence of a very great curtailment of their direct Missionary work. As there are chaplains at most of these stations, the Missionary is not required to do any thing in English; and, even where the chaplain is inefficient, and he thinks it his duty to preach in English, he is often opposed as an intruder; and thus while he is drawn away, in some measure, from his proper work, he does not obtain an open door of usefulness, but is obliged to labor among a few, with but little comfort or success.

If, however, he is successful in English, he is drawn into so many connexions, that a very great part of his time is frittered away, either in making or receiving visits, so that he has not leisure to cultivate the language and familiarize himself sufficiently with the natives, or to exercise with effect the peculiar gifts requisite to form an efficient Missionary.

Where the Mission is strong, these objections to English work will not hold so good—as it may be distributed among the body in such a way as to be to each individual a mere relaxation from the more difficult work of the Mission. For each to preach a sermon now and then, will only be an agreeable change, and will tend to keep up the power of speaking in his own language, and promote associations of a pleasing nature, with the varied sympathies of his native land and early

habits; but where one has to give half his time and talents to English work, the other half will not likely be of much value.

To be a thorough Missionary, a man should do nothing else, unless what may come under the description of mere recreation. The company and interruptions arising from English engagements, (for the preaching is the least of it) are incompatible with that close and undivided attention to direct Missionary labor, which is necessary to enable a man to surmount its difficulties. In studying the language, preaching, writing, translating, superintending schools, &c., almost every hour of every day will be employed, and little will be left for any thing more than that portion of English reading required to keep up the tone of his mental energies—continually being exhausted by giving out, but rarely refreshed by receiving knowledge. If this portion of a Missionary's time is given to company, so frivolous as that of India is generally, it will ultimately tell with sad, and enervating effect on his intellectual powers. Missionaries are, in general, so much engaged in active duties, that they have little time at best for mental improvement; and hence, some of them become gradually deficient in habits of thought and mental application. This is an evil to be guarded against, and can only be so by a careful husbanding of time, and a strict devotion of every spare hour to useful reading.

From these remarks you will perceive that I consider populous native places, where there are

few or no Europeans, as more favorable to Missionary success, or at least to undivided suitable exertions among the heathen; and also, that the population of such places is more likely to give the Gospel a candid hearing, than those generally do who inhabit European settlements, especially Military stations. • In support of these views, it is enough for my present purpose, to point to the success of our Brethren in Southern India, among communities purely native, and also to the fact, that, while the largest portion of the labors of our Calcutta Brethren has been in the city, among the mixed population peculiar to it as an English town, by far the greater part of their success has been in the villages, where the inhabitants were unmingled with Europeans.

But let me not be understood as if I wished any existing Mission to be abandoned, or even curtailed. That in Calcutta especially, from its being in the capital of the country from which much either good or evil must emanate, ought rather to be greatly enlarged. Though many of the objections which I have mentioned, lie against Calcutta as much as against any other European station, yet I conceive such is the vast importance of a strong and effective Mission there, that the existence of these difficulties only calls for more zealous efforts, and a greater determination on the part of Missionary Societies not to rest till our great Indian Metropolis is, in the fullest sense of the word yet realized, a *Christian city*. My only object is to show, that, in our future enlargement

of operations, we ought not to follow the track of Europeans, but go at once among the indigenous mass of the people. Small towns around Military cantonments ought to be avoided, for though it is true we should supply the destitute every where, yet where our means enable us only to supply a few stations, it is best to take those that naturally promise the earliest and best fruit. Such large cities as Patna, Benares, Agra, Delhi or Furruckabad, which have each a small European appendage within a few miles, are so little affected by the influence of soldiery, &c. that they do not come under the objections to which I refer. But even at such places as these, care should be taken by the Missionaries not to locate themselves at the English station, but in the native city. If the necessary regard due to health, will not admit of the latter, they should at least be nearer the city than the English station. Some of the native cities will scarcely admit of an European living in them without considerable danger to health, to disregard which would argue but a very spurious sort of zeal; but some place can almost always be found about the suburbs, that will be as public as in the heart of the city, and at the same time avoid the inconvenience of living at the English station, and being lost to the native eye among the ever-changing European community.

There are two arguments of considerable apparent force that are generally urged in favour of Missionaries being placed at European stations.



The one is, that by doing good to the Europeans, they do away with the influence of bad example, and turn some of them into instruments of positive usefulness. The other is, that at such places we are able to raise more funds for schools and other local purposes than we could otherwise do.

Both of these reasons are very good as it respects one or two stations with which I am acquainted. For instance, at Monghyr, where there is a small invalid station, our Baptist Brethren have been very useful both among Europeans and natives—nor does one branch of labor seem to have interfered with the other. But such a station is not a fair specimen. In the first place, there is not a chaplain, so that the call to preach the Gospel to our countrymen is clear; and, in the second place, as it respects the native work, there is not a rabble of European soldiers, to bring the Gospel into contempt in every bazar, but a number of quiet families of non-commissioned officers, retired from the service, and a few respectable gentlemen, principally in official stations.

It is true, every European brought to the knowledge of the truth, becomes a witness in its favor, but as there are means of grace more or less suitable at most stations, where a considerable number of Europeans is to be found, the Missionary is not required to go out of the way of his direct labor; and, if he does, a prejudice hurtful to his usefulness is generally excited against him as pursuing sectarian objects. By all means we

ought to preach the Gospel to all that come in our way; but, at the same time, let nothing stand between us and our great work among the heathen. This is the grand object for which we came out, and have spent years in learning languages, &c.; and to leave it even partially for other labors, however useful, unless specially and manifestly called by providential circumstances, is a sort of betraying of the cause.

As to the other argument about raising funds, I think it is of very little weight. It is true, a Missionary by sacrificing one half of his time to English preaching and English society, may raise a few hundred rupees a year towards such objects; but are those funds worth the time and attention thus applied? By this alienation of time and thoughts from direct native work, his qualifications for that work are proportionably diminished. He requires to live and breath in a native atmosphere, before the language and thoughts of the people can become as it were naturalized to him, so as to give him that access to their hearts which he wishes to obtain.

The high standard of efficiency which I should wish to see reached by all, is incompatible with that state of divided attention, which a man, half English Pastor and half Missionary, can at best give to native work. Instances have taken place of great efficiency in both departments, but such are exceptions arising from rare combinations of both moral and intellectual excellencies. But such should never be expected generally to appear,

and the standard reached only by a few very superior men,—should not be taken as a rule for all.

If we expect to see a Missionary body of high efficiency, they must not be entangled with English duties. And if funds for local objects cannot be collected without the sacrifice of one half of our time, it would be better to abandon a part of them, and content ourselves with the free gifts of the few, whose hearts are in the work, and who will give cheerfully, without our making any such sacrifice of our time and talents to their personal gratification. There are not a few of such real friends to the cause in India, and it is great cause of thankfulness to God that they are gradually increasing. These are the supporters most to be depended on, and with respect to them, the more they see us at our own direct work, and the less we are seen in the European circles, their contributions will be the more liberal.

The general conclusion to which the above remarks seem to lead, is, that places inhabited entirely by natives are most eligible for Mission stations—that Military posts especially should be avoided, at least when not close to large native cities or towns—and that, in general, a Missionary should neither live much in European society, nor be entangled with English work. While few Societies could with prudence abandon any existing Mission, it would be well in taking up new places, which the enlarged spirit of zeal may yet enable them to do, to be careful to attend to con-

centration for facilitating co-operation, and the selection of locations where the population is entirely or almost entirely native, that nothing may exist to prevent the greatest possible amount of direct Missionary labor.

Yours, &c.

W. B.

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## LETTER VII.

### PREACHING TO THE HEATHEN.

DEAR FRIEND,

Having in the foregoing letter treated of the location of Missions in India, I shall now proceed to make some remarks on the different modes of labor among the heathen.

Among the means to be employed for promoting conversion, the direct preaching of the Gospel claims the first place, both on account of its scriptural character, and its natural adaptation to the great object for which it is designed. In this letter I shall take it for granted that preaching is the principal means to be employed by the Missionary, reserving my remarks on the claims of other plans of operation, till I come to treat of them, and the part they are calculated to perform in the work of evangelization.

The word preaching I would, however, be understood to use rather in the scriptural than in

the modern sense. The verb *κηρυσσω* to preach, is never used in Scripture to signify the delivering of discourses or exhortations to a church, or assembly of Christians: the delivery of such discourses being called prophesying, teaching, exhorting, &c. To preach, was to make known the facts and doctrines of the Gospel to the heathen or unbelievers, whether Jews or Gentiles. When the preaching has taken effect, and the announcement of the first great fundamental truths of Christianity has been believed, the hearers become disciples, and the process of preaching to them, gives place to that of instructing them in all the will of God, and exhorting them to purity of life, and obedience to the commands of Christ. Preaching then, is the announcement, by the living voice, of the first principles of the Gospel, to those who are not as yet within the pale of the Christian Church. The delivery of set discourses is not therefore what is exclusively meant by preaching to the heathen, but it includes all kinds of *viva voce* communications of Christian truth, whether in public addresses to assemblies, or in conversation with individuals or small parties.

There are various ways of preaching to the heathen, and each Missionary will generally be, to a great extent, directed by his own capabilities, and other circumstances. The various methods pursued, may, however, be all included under the general denomination of direct addresses to audiences, or of conversational discussions. Whether the former or the latter of these methods is prefer-

able, must depend on circumstances. Each has its peculiar advantages and disadvantages. My own opinion however, is, that where it is practicable, the plan of delivering regular discourses, is decidedly preferable to that of conversational discussion; but this is on the supposition that the Missionary is possessed of that ready utterance which will enable him to adopt either practice. In some cases, either the one or the other plan becomes imperative from necessity. One man can make a good discourse, and deliver it in an interesting and impressive manner, but has little or no talent for conversation: another fails so much in his elocution, that he is quite unable to gain the attention of a mixed crowd of heathen, but has great power in gaining access to their minds by conversation. In all such cases, Providence has clearly marked out the peculiar mode in which each should conduct his ministration; but where no such peculiarities exist in the mental conformation of the Missionary himself, and he can adopt either way with nearly equal ease, he should by all means try to get as many hearers as possible, either within or out of doors, and preach to them as much as he can in short, clear and pithy discourses, with no more controversial matter than is absolutely necessary, when he has not only to oppose error, but also the general disinclination of the human mind to Divine truth.

There are many reasons for preferring this mode of address. One very important one is this, that with the same exertion of physical strength, and

a less expenditure of time, the Gospel may be proclaimed to a much greater number of individuals. One who has to confine himself to the conversational mode, can rarely expound the Gospel to many at a time: much of what he says is also of comparatively little value, as he is constantly drawn into the discussion of topics of but little importance, by the flippancy of the people, or the cunning of opponents. He who delivers a more connected discourse, on the other hand, has the choice of his own subject, and can generally go on with it, without interruption, though sometimes he may have to go out of his way a little, to anticipate objections, or to reply to such as may be made by some one present. Opponents will sometimes interrupt his discourse; but in general, with a little tact, he can put them off to the end, when if their objections have not been incidentally met during the address, they may be more conveniently taken up.

As almost all the objections of the heathen are well known to every experienced Missionary, he may so construct his discourses as to anticipate most of the arguments they are likely to bring forward, so that the intended objectors, observing this, will be careful of committing themselves, and will in all probability remain silent. He has thus the advantage of their not being piqued at any supposed exposure of their own weakness, so that he may use the utmost liberty in appealing to their consciences, in order to leave an impression on their minds.

The Missionaries who engage much in preaching to the heathen are by no means uniform in their mode of procedure. Some preach in rather a controversial style, spending much of their efforts in exposing the errors of idolatry. Others say comparatively little on these topics, but content themselves with explaining the Gospel, and pressing it on their attention, as sinners in the sight of God. The best course would, however, seem to be a medium between these two extremes; and this medium is, on the whole, so far as I know, followed by the most efficient of the Missionary body, though various shades of difference may exist in the methods adopted. To dwell constantly on the errors of the heathen irritates their feelings, and repels them from hearing with candour; but, at the same time, a firm dispassionate refutation of their system, accompanied with a mild and affectionate appeal to their better sense and feelings, rarely gives offence, but, on the contrary, often produces a very favorable state of attention to the great truths of the Gospel.

The best way to displace error is to teach the truth. Perhaps it is therefore better to dwell most,—partly on the universal depravity of human nature, and the wonderful love of God in sending his Son to remedy it by the sacrifice of himself, than on the refutation of mere observances, that must certainly vanish before the light of the truth. At the same time, all the abominations of idolatry must be fully exposed, that the way may be cleared for the Gospel; but in doing so, the utmost



care and circumspection should be observed that the exposure of such errors may not produce hostility to the truth, rather than a conviction of the evil of idolatry with its attendant superstitions. It is possible to say all that can be said against the delusions of heathenism, without apparently producing any bad feeling; but it is also possible to say these things in such a way as will bring the people round us like a nest of hornets. Some years ago, I met with a Missionary at a large native mela, or festival, whom the Bramins would not allow to utter a sentence without interrupting him, and entering with him into angry discussions; and yet the very same people listened to another, who could not speak the language so well, with the utmost attention, and even seemed impressed as well as pleased with what they heard, though the latter spared their errors as little as the former. There is, in fact, more danger of giving offence by one's tone and manner than by what is said. To a Missionary it is of great importance to feel, as it were, the pulse of his audience before certain topics are introduced. Abrupt attacks on their gods, ceremonies, and popular superstitions, or even the sudden or unpreluded introduction of some of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, often does more harm than good. The very people who one day will not listen to our doctrines, will hear them another day with silent and profound attention, and not only so, but will even join with us in condemning their own errors. One unguarded expression will sometimes spoil the temper of a

crowd, but perhaps that very expression will be quite approved by them if uttered at a more suitable time and place. I have preached against idolatry in a crowded idol temple, but in such a place great caution is required, and expressions that might be used elsewhere, might spoil the good feeling and destroy the attention of the hearers, many of whom are supported by the system.

If practicable, all objections should be put off to the end of the discourse, so that the people may not be deprived of a connected view of the subject, merely to gratify the vanity and love of wrangling in a few individuals. It not unfrequently happens, that a man, who, in the earlier part of a discourse, wishes to say something in objection, if put off to the end, will be so convinced by what he subsequently hears, that he will decline saying what he intended, and the effect is good when one owns that his mind is satisfied, and that what he wished to say was unfounded. The audience thus breaks up with the favorable impression of what they have heard, on their minds, and retire with a much greater degree of seriousness than when a discussion has taken place; when, at least one of the parties has argued for nothing but victory, or the display of his talents. Where there is any thing like a disposition to honest enquiry, discussions are very useful; but the Missionary requires to be very cautious how he plunges into an argument, before he has any idea about the object of his opponent.

Sometimes that object is only to raise a laugh at the expense of religion, or the preacher, in order to show off his own wit: at other times, it is to divert the people, by mere senseless talk, from the attention they have been manifesting. In such cases, I have found one rule to be useful, that is, never to begin any discussion with those whom I have marked as inattentive, listening with a sneer; or, who, by whispering, winking, &c., seemed to wish to turn attention from the speaker toward themselves. When I have seen such an individual come forward to start an objection, or make a speech, I have cut him short at once, without hearing him, and addressed him so that all might hear, to the following effect:—"Sir, I have observed you all the time of my discourse. You have not been attentive, but have been whispering, smiling, winking, and sneering. No well-bred, sensible man would act so, especially where the subject is important, and connected with our eternal interests. You have thus shewn yourself unworthy of being allowed to speak on such weighty matters, among respectable men; therefore I will not discuss them with you, but if any other person present, who has listened attentively, will put a question, I shall hear him, and reply with pleasure." This generally has the desired effect, and such persons have often received, at the same time, severe reproofs from the audience, so that they have been glad to beg pardon for their flippancy.

Those who come evidently with an intention to dispute, should rarely be indulged with an oppor-

tunity, as their purpose generally is not to hear a word from the Missionary, but to draw the attention of the people entirely from him, and then to get the meeting broken up in confusion. In such cases, a firm determination to admit of no interruption, but to insist on their having the good manners of hearing us out before attempting to reply, generally defeats their object. When they find the Missionary has nearly done, they often slink away, as they know his immediate object is gained when his address has been heard; and he is now comparatively indifferent whether the people disperse or not: and as they have lost the chance of distracting the people's attention, they have no wish to run the risk of any greater defeat, by an exposure of their own arguments.

Some also come after the discourse is partly over; and without staying to hear any thing, press confidently forward to dispute. Such ought particularly to be kept in check, as they are generally impertinent wranglers, whose only object is mischief, or the display of their own supposed cleverness. The following is a specimen of the class, and the mode I have found best adapted to meet it:—I was one day addressing a considerable crowd of Hindoos in a public place at Benares, on the evils of idolatry, and had got about half through my discourse, when all at once a very consequential-looking Musselman, Moulvee, pressed through the crowd, and, without listening a moment to what I was saying, interrupted me with an objection to the Divinity of Christ, to which I

had made no reference whatever. I merely stopped to tell him to reserve this subject till my discourse was done, and then resumed.—“But,” says he, drawing himself up as majestically as he could, “I have put this question, and must have an answer now.” I replied, “Sir, you are a Musselman, and I am addressing Hindoos on a subject which has nothing to do with matters in dispute between Christians and Mohammedans. You ought to have as much good manners as to wait a proper time for introducing quite another subject—so if you cannot wait till I have done speaking to these people, you had better walk away and not disturb us.” Hearing this, he made a low bow, and walked away. The people made way for him; some of them smiling at his evident chagrin; and then turned round with redoubled attention to hear the rest of the discourse. Had I permitted him to draw me into a discussion, his end would have been gained; the attention of the people would have been distracted; and most would have gone away without hearing the Gospel, who, in this case heard it plainly stated and enforced.

In preaching to the heathen, very great prudence is requisite, both in the selection of the topics, and in the manner of treating them. As to topics, every one will see that they ought to be simple, but important. Any thing beyond the great fundamental doctrines and precepts of the Gospel, would be out of place. Still, however, if any one supposes that this renders the work of the Missionary preacher easier than that of the English

preacher, he is in a great mistake. The narrower range of his topics renders it more difficult for him to obtain suitable illustrations adapted to the minds of the people. To fix the wandering attention of a rude, fluctuating, and often hostile assembly; to calm the turbulence of a crowd, not come together because they are disposed to hear, but drawn by various fortuitous causes; and so to bespeak their favorable regard, as to induce them to listen to the truth; to hear, in short, their own religion depreciated, and a strange system of doctrine expounded, is certainly a task that requires both nerve and skill. Many a man who can fill a pulpit at home with respectability, would undoubtedly break down, were he called to make an attempt among the heathen. In fact the Missionary requires a sort of training quite peculiar. He should have all the qualities of a good home preacher; but he requires also a power of bearing all annoyances and interruptions with the utmost imperturbability. He should also be able to abandon the beaten track, and to take advantage of any train of thought that may be struck out by the state of his audience, or that may be raised even by an opponent. His address should be lively, pointed, bold, and affectionate; and especially free from any thing like technicalities. He should always be prepared both for addressing attentive hearers, and for silencing by the force of argument, any sort of objectors that may appear. In discussion he should be calm and composed, and entirely free from irritability. Even blasphemy

itself must often be heard, as well as gross personal abuse : and he must learn amidst the most virulent attacks, both on himself and his religion, to bear all with the utmost equanimity. That fluent, energetic, and impressive kind of speaking and manner, which rivets the mind, and keeps every hearer, *nolens volens*, in a state of attention ; and which, from its clearness and tone of confidence, seems almost to paralyze the power of objection, has long appeared to me what is peculiarly adapted to Missionary work. A slow unanimated delivery, however good the matter, does not suit, where the hearers are not themselves desirous of profiting. A good, firm, and distinct voice, such as may be heard over all sorts of whispering and other noises, is also necessary in a good Missionary preacher ; for if he cannot, without any other aid than his voice, and the pathos and interest of his manner, draw every eye and ear to himself, he will often entirely fail of getting a good hearing.

It has been a sad mistake to suppose that inferior preaching talents may do for the Missionary work. The very contrary is the fact. Eloquence of a far higher and more varied order is required, than that which might do in an English pulpit, where the preacher, from having only to walk in a well-beaten track, may acquit himself well, as far as his ordinary ministrations are concerned, without possessing any very considerable oratorical power of speaking in a strange language, to people of strange manners and new modes of thinking. The fact that a man has to

divest Christian doctrine of all technical words and phrases, and to give to it new forms and combinations, is surely sufficient to show, that preaching to the heathen requires the exercise of no ordinary powers. How many respectable ministers are there who have no idea of preaching the Gospel apart from the technicalities of the theological schools, and who would be almost silenced, at least till they had given much more than usual attention to the subject, if some forty or fifty words or phrases were to be denied them, and they were obliged to find new and original forms of expression for almost every Christian truth. But the Missionary, in preaching to the heathen, has not only to strike out into a new and untrodden path, but has so to arrange the whole tenor of his preaching, as to bring Christianity to bear on the extermination of systems of error, quite new to himself and to the modes of teaching in which he has been educated. Were he able to teach only in the language of the theological schools, his hearers would regard his discourse as an unmeaning jargon, from which they would turn away in disgust. To speak well and efficiently with such difficulties in his way, he must be a man of ready eloquence, as well as a philosophical linguist, capable of moulding and bending figures of speech into all the plastic forms required for conveying to the mind of his hearers, new trains of thought and doctrines unheard of by them before. All this he has often to do at the spur of the moment; and that in the presence of acute and watchful oppo-



nents, who will be glad to take the advantage of every weak point. It is easy to see that a feeble and common-place speaker is not very likely to succeed in such a task, without, at least, great sacrifice of time and study, in order to learn from others, whose powers are more original. It is not to be denied, that men of very ordinary, and even inferior oratorical powers, have been, and occasionally are, useful, and very useful, among the heathen; but, as a general rule, it may be laid down, that the highest preaching talents should be sought for; and that the possessors of these, having at the same time the other necessary qualifications, are the most likely men to produce a great impression on the native mind. If such men can be obtained, men of inferior preaching talents ought not to be sent out to the work.

From these remarks, you will perceive, that I give the preference to the plan of preaching as much as possible, in animated and continuous discourses, as more effectual in general, than the mode which may be called merely conversational. The latter method ought to go to a considerable extent, hand-in-hand with the other; and is also very useful in all such cases, where the laborer's peculiar talents are of a conversational, more than of an oratorical character. Conversation does not, however, exclude the other plan, but is naturally auxiliary to it, as pastoral visits are auxiliary to pulpit exercises, among Christian ministers in other parts of the world.

As to the method of carrying on the conver-

sational plan of preaching, it must obviously be much the same as that of more public addresses. A kind, conciliating, and sympathizing manner, has, in the other case, much effect; while every thing like overbearing or superciliousness does harm. In the conversational way, most risk of meeting with abuse and personal annoyance will be found to exist; and, consequently, the greater care must be taken to avoid every thing like warmth or retaliation. It brings the Missionary more into immediate contact with all the petulance and ill nature of individuals; and thus, while it does not present so large a field as the plan of more set addresses, it on the whole, perhaps, exposes one to more personal temptation; but where the Missionary has great conversational powers, as well as amiable and interesting manners, he may do much in this way, and reap most of the benefits of the more regular plan; but for the reasons above given, I think it desirable that no one should confine himself to this mode, where he can do otherwise. I should even be disposed to think, that men who can only converse, unless in rare cases, are not adapted to the work.

As I have made this letter so long, I shall now leave the subject, as some remarks will be made afterwards on its relative importance, compared with the plan of the propagation of Christianity by schools, which will exhaust all that seems to demand consideration on this very important point.

Yours &c.

W. B.

## LETTER VIII.

## TRANSLATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

DEAR FRIEND,

Next to the direct preaching of the Gospel, the preparation of good translations of the Holy Scriptures, seems the most important part of Missionary labor in its early stages. In this department there is still a great deal of work to be accomplished, before the evangelization of India can be said to be in an advanced state. A good deal, it is true, has been done in the translation of the Scriptures; but from the peculiar difficulties of the case, the works have been necessarily imperfect.

The first Missionaries, such as the Serampore brethren, and Henry Martyn, found the vernacular languages in a rude unformed state, without any literature of sufficient consequence to form a standard of writing. The learning of the Hindoos was monopolized by the Bramins, and placed beyond vulgar reach, in the impenetrable recesses of the Sanscrit, while that of the Musselmans, though not in the hands of a separate class, was almost equally inaccessible to the mass of the people, by being confined to the Arabic and Persian. The vernacular languages were scarcely reduced to writing, as all the business and even the correspondence in the country was carried on in one or the other of these learned languages. The only

books were merely popular songs and a few poems; but even these could scarcely be said to be in the vernacular languages, as they were always written in a sort of poetic dialect, or rather a mixture of all the dialects. In Hindui, there was not a single prose work till a few years ago, so that a translator was left entirely without a model. In the Urdu, or Hindustani, or, as it may be called, the Indo-Persian, which is used by the Musselmans, and forms in fact the *lingua franca* of all India, there are scarcely any works but those prepared under the patronage of Europeans. The earlier students of this language had nothing to guide them in forming a style adapted to the people; and as the whole was in a state of transition, it was exceedingly difficult to find out what words were, or were not, admissible into the language.

The natural consequence of these difficulties was, that the first attempts at translation were made very much in the dark. Their authors took either the learned languages, Arabic, Persic, or Sanscrit, as their standard; and hence they composed in a style much above the comprehension of the body of the people; or they aimed at no standard but the common conversation of those around them; and hence fell into a low and vulgar style, peculiar perhaps to one district. Such a style the educated classes, who could scarcely be brought to read any thing in the vernacular dialect, under any circumstances, very naturally looked upon with perfect contempt.

Thus, in the Hindui and Urdu, two classes of

works have been introduced ; and I believe nearly the same has been the case in the Bengali. But neither of these classes can be regarded as fully suitable ; and now a pretty general effort is being made to establish a medium between them. The one class is too high for the people, and the other too low in its diction to be read with pleasure by any whose education is sufficient to enable them to profit by books. Martyn's Hindustani New Testament, and most of the Old, by Thomason, are the chief of the high-style school ; and Dr. Carey's may be ranked at the head of the low or vulgar class. Dr. Carey did not know much of the language himself, as far as appears from any of his attempts in it ; and his native assistants, in translating, seem only to have known Hindustani, as spoken by the lower orders, and that in a particular district. Whatever may have been Dr. Carey's merits, as a linguist or translator in general, and whatever may have been the difficulty of the work at the time, nothing seems clearer than, that with respect to this version, he has not succeeded. In fact, it is below mediocrity, being as to the language a mere bazar jargon, of which no educated man could read a chapter without disgust.

Martyn's is a work of a far higher order than Carey's ; and will, no doubt, be regarded as the basis of all future Hindustani versions. Considering the time at which it was made, and the difficulties the author had to overcome, perhaps his translation may be thought quite as good as could have reasonably been expected. Still, however, it is

intelligible to those only who understand Persic. If read to any mere Hindustani congregation, they could not understand it without note or comment. Many of the words taken from Persic and Arabic, though familiar to the learned, are not naturalized in India, and are consequently no more understood by the common people, than an unanglicised Greek or Latin expression would be by uneducated Englishmen. Even the construction of the sentences is often not Indian, but Persic or Arabic.

These remarks apply principally to the Epistolary part, as the Gospels are more plain. To many of the people, a great part of the Epistles are unintelligible, and not well understood even by those of moderate education. With all its faults, however, it is the only version that has been hitherto in considerable use, and indeed the only one that we could use; and it also forms, to a great extent, the ground-work of the new versions now in the press.

The translation of a considerable part of the Old Testament, made by, or under the superintendence of, the Rev. Mr. Thomason, has all the defects of Martyn's New Testament, without some of its redeeming qualities. A great many of the most difficult words are taken from Arabic and Persic, and are used in a regular manner to express the most common ideas for which there are suitable words in every one's mouth. A high Arabic word, never heard in the spoken language, is often used to express such simple ideas as long or short, east or west; so that one feels at once that the

translator was not conversant with the language of the people ; or if so, despised it, and was determined to enrich it by a foreign jargon. This is the more surprising in the case of Mr. T's version, as there are passages here and there very simply and idiomatically translated. In short, the Old Testament requires a complete revision in those parts which are purely historical. The Psalms are but miserably executed, and so are the Proverbs, and one or two more Books ; but of nearly all the Prophets, a complete new version is necessary. The whole Old Testament will thus require to be gone over anew from the foundation, and harmonized with the style of the new versions of the New Testament now completed. Till this is done, we cannot put the complete Scriptures in any intelligible form, into the hands of our native converts who read Urdu. We have in our hands unfinished versions, by the late Rev. Mr. Robertson, which will form the ground-work of a translation of the Prophets, if we should be able to undertake the work.

With respect to the two Urdu versions now in the press, by the Baptist Missionaries in Calcutta and ourselves, it would not be proper for me to speak much, as it would be judging in a case in which I myself am concerned. It may be remarked, however, that both are made on the medium principle, as to language ; viz. being neither so high as some of the preceding attempts, nor so low as others. There may be little doubt, that the experience of our predecessors, as well as

our own, and the gradual development of the language itself, have tended to give greater certainty than hitherto could have been expected, with respect to the exact style suited to the people; so that it may be hoped that these versions are more adapted for popular purposes, than those made under much more unfavorable circumstances, though by greater men. Of course we only follow as correctors and improvers of the works of others; and, though we may have felt it necessary to build again from the foundation, at least to a great extent, we have had the advantage of the materials being in a great measure prepared for us before hand. Only some of the Gospels, by the Baptists; and Luke and Acts, by the Church Missionaries, have yet appeared; but there can be little doubt, that they are in almost every respect far better translations than have yet been published in Urdu.

The whole New Testament in Urdu, by our Mission at Benares, is now finished, and will issue soon from the press, and I trust will be an improvement on the past. The Urdu New Testament may thus be considered in a fair way to be brought to considerable perfection; and after some time, these versions may be expected to amalgamate, so as to produce one of such excellence as will enable it, by tacit consent, to take the place of something like an authorized translation. It will be a good while, however, before the Old Testament can be brought even to the state of improvement at which the New has already arrived.



In the Hindui no good translation has yet been made, though its various dialects form the most extensive spoken language in India. Mr. Chamberlain prepared a version of the New Testament in the Brij, or as it is usually called the Brij Bhasha dialect, which was printed at the Serampore press; this dialect has not been much used in books, unless for poetry. It is now, though rather the parent of Hindui, merely a vulgar or local dialect. This version is therefore of little value, as the Brij Bhasha, bears about the same relation to the Hindui, as the Scotch does to the English, so that there is no more use for a separate Brij version, than for a vulgar Scotch one for the people of Scotland. It is much to be regretted that the Serampore Missionaries, in their laudable zeal for increasing translations, exceeded in various instances their powers of producing good ones, and sometimes, as in this case, did not discriminate properly between local dialects and languages positively different. The consequence was, that some of the versions were the most imperfect attempts that could well have been made; and others were not required at all, as they were made into mere dialects, which were not so different from the common language used in writing, and which was perfectly well understood. The really different languages in India are not so numerous, if we except those of some scattered hill tribes, as it is often imagined; but the local dialects are endless. Every district, as in most countries, has its peculiarities; but one language in general with

such variations as are perfectly trifling as it respects intercourse, is found to prevail over immense provinces.

Thus the Hindui, though varying a little every few miles, is spoken over the whole of Northern India, from Rajmahal to the Indus, over thousands of miles of country, and by nations of the most different general characters. Even in Bengal it is partially understood; and last time I was in that province, I preached in Hindui to a large crowd of people, who, though they were Bengalis, two of my Missionary brethren present assured me they understood me well.

In fact I have observed in my own experience, that the Hindui, such as we use at Benares, viz., what is generally spoken by the Bramins, is understood by the Sikhs of the Punjab, the Rajpoots of Central, as well as by all the natives of Upper India in general; and even the Nepalese, Marhattas, and Guzeratees, though they have languages, or rather dialects of their own, are almost always able to speak, or at least to understand Hindui.

The Hindui is therefore a language of the first importance, and the preparation of good versions in it, ought to have met with much greater attention than it has ever received. Instead of taking up mere village dialects of it, had undivided attention been given to one good translation, in such a style as comes nearest to a common dialect, or such as is most used by those who speak with propriety in the principal cities and towns where

it is used, much more progress might ere now have been made.

The Rev. W. Bowley, of Chunar, of the Church Society, has done more for the Hindui, by his translations and writings, than any other man. This indefatigable laborer, though placed under every disadvantage, has succeeded in making a translation of the whole Scriptures, and, in some degree, has formed a standard of writing in a language where there was scarcely any prose writing before his time. Mr. B's version, however, though it will be on the whole a good basis for others, can only be considered as a first attempt; and, though no one who knows any thing of the difficulties he had to encounter, will be disposed to put small value upon his labors; yet it will be conceded, that it was impossible his version could be any thing like a critical work, as he was unacquainted with the originals, and could only translate from English, with what helps he could get from the Urdu or Persic versions.

People at home may be ready to exclaim, 'Why was a man appointed to translate the Scriptures, who knew neither Greek nor Hebrew?' The answer is simply this: there was no other man so well acquainted with good Hindui, as to be able to do the work, who was at the same time otherwise qualified. Had Mr. Bowley not done his best, as the case stood, no Hindui version, would in all probability, have yet been produced; and it was surely better, even to make a translation from a translation, than to withhold till an indefinite

period,\* “the words of eternal life”. from the vast multitudes of natives who speak this language. The meanest translation as to critical accuracy, is surely better than none at all; and it would be almost impossible with any degree of fidelity, to make a version from the English authorized one, in which all the great truths shall not be distinctly manifest. But, after all, Mr. Bowley’s Hindui version is as good even as to the renderings of the original sense, as some professing to be carefully made from the Greek and Hebrew, though it must be allowed that there are some errors, which a knowledge of the original would have obviated. Mr. Bowley has done all that could have been expected of any man in his circumstances, and more than could have been expected. He has furnished a basis for all future translations, and it is to be hoped that others whose education may better qualify them, will take up the work, and bring it to that state of critical correctness which could not be reached at once.

It is to be regretted that the Calcutta Bible Society, is at present republishing this translation without any revision, though there are now various individuals who could have much improved the work; and even the translator was anxious to revise it, but the Committee did not give him an opportunity, which would no doubt have enabled him, with the advice of more learned friends, greatly to improve it, especially in its critical character.

These are the versions which it most concerns me to notice, as they are those required for the whole

of the North of India, Bengal excepted. Of those in Bengal, I am not qualified to speak, but I believe from the greater labor bestowed on them, and the higher qualifications of the translators, they are in general better than the Urdu and Hindui, though they are still in some measure complained of. But perfection is not attainable.

With respect to translations of the Scriptures, I think it is to be regretted that no other medium has been found out, through which the Bible Society might communicate its aid to new or improved versions, than that of constituting the Calcutta Bible Committee its almoners, as well as judges of the merits of works requiring assistance.

As it respects Bengali, the Calcutta Committee it may be supposed will be able to judge, as they have among them Missionaries and others, who are both Bengali and Biblical Scholars; but with respect to Urdu, Hindui, Persian, &c. they form by no means a proper tribunal. The clerical part of the Committee consists of chaplains of the Company and Missionaries. The former, though they may be acquainted with Biblical literature, are destitute of any useful knowledge of Indian languages. All their duties are in English, and they rarely have either time or inclination to attend to any thing else. The Missionary part of the Committee contains some men of very high attainments in Bengali, but not in Urdu, Hindui, &c. Their whole time and attention are bestowed on the language of the people around them, and they are

consequently unfit to judge of versions into languages, of which, if they know any thing, it is next to nothing.—The remaining portion of the Committee is composed of laymen, who are generally civil or military officers of the Company. Some of these gentlemen are tolerably acquainted with the languages of Upper India, but have not been accustomed to any thing like critical discrimination; and as they are generally altogether unacquainted with Biblical criticism, their opinion of any version of Scripture is at best but a partial or one-sided view of the subject. They may know that a translation reads pretty well, or the contrary, as to general style, but are quite unable to say how it agrees with the original; and as they feel that they cannot critically examine passages, they generally content themselves with reading a chapter or two, and then give their opinion *pro* or *con*, without reference to the original at all. This is no supposed case, but matter of fact. I have known instances in which portions of Scripture have been received, and ordered to be published, on the mere recommendation of several laymen, none of whom had read the whole, or compared it with the original.

That a body so constituted as the above, should be able to give an opinion of any value, on a subject requiring such care and consideration, as well as Biblical learning, it would be unreasonable to expect. But these men are the only dispensers of the bounty of the Bible Society. Translators in India, therefore, before they can get any aid,

though they may have spent years of toil and research, both into the original Scriptures and the native languages, must submit their productions to a tribunal, the majority of whose members know nothing whatever of the matter about which they are called to decide. After years of labor in preparing himself for such work, and others of daily and nightly exertion in accomplishing his task, three or four military officers, utterly ignorant of all the principles of Biblical translation, are asked their opinion of it, or requested to model it to their minds. The other year, the Calcutta Committee requested an individual who knew not a Greek letter, to simplify part of Martyn's Urdu version, and then published it without knowing any thing about the alterations made, though some of them were in defiance of every principle of criticism, and even sectarian in their tendency.

From these remarks, let it not be supposed that I mean to say the Calcutta Bible Committee is in all cases an unsuitable tribunal, as it respects versions. I have no doubt but in some cases it, as well as other similarly constituted bodies may judge accurately, but this of course can only be of such translations as are made into the language, with which at least a number of the members, who are at the same time Biblical scholars, are well and critically acquainted. I refer only to the state of things at Calcutta with respect to the languages of Upper India, and the inconvenience and vexation of translators having to submit their labors to an incompetent tribunal, and the consequent

discouragement to our engaging in the work of translation at all. As long as the Society assumes the power of revising and altering any translation it receives, and is so notoriously unfit to be trusted with such a power, a translator, or body of translators, has no guarantee, but that in a few years all the benefits of the improvements introduced, may be entirely destroyed by the Committee engaging some unqualified person to revise the whole, and who will almost to a certainty expunge the most valuable renderings of difficult passages, from his utter incapability of perceiving or appreciating the critical grounds on which they have been made.

In the present state of things, it is very difficult to form a body capable of judging well of versions, and perhaps it would be as well that no attempt should be made to form one ; for, after all, it is not the decision of any half dozen men, that can fairly stamp a version of the Scripture with that character, which will make it worthy or unworthy of circulation, or of Bible Society patronage. And the Society itself does unintentionally a great deal of harm to the cause of translation, by thus professing to decide on the merits of untried works, which often, though not fitted for universal adoption, might, if brought out at first, at least in small editions, contribute something towards the final perfection of the work. Perhaps the most satisfactory plan would be for the Bible Society to have nothing to do in deciding on the merits of versions, but to print large editions



of the most approved existing ones, for general circulation; and when any new one is offered, to print a small edition, so as to let the work be seen, and judged of by the public; and, in the event of its being called for, it might be reprinted with any improvements which the translators could make from the advice of others, or enlarged experience.

If the demand for a new version thus published should become considerable, the Society might supply it accordingly, and in time be able to ascertain whether the old one requires to be left unprinted, or whether there may not be a demand for both.

The Society would thus have different versions in its depository at the same time, and the demand for them, especially by the different Missionaries in the country, who are generally the best judges, would in the course of time decide which was most useful, so that the best version in the end would be sure to be generally adopted; and the proper course for the Society would thus be marked out, as those translations not in demand could be allowed gradually to go out of print. There are no doubt many, and great advantages to be obtained by having a sort of authorized version; but it ought to be remembered that any premature attempts at having such a version in India, where so much improvement is yet required, would produce incalculable mischief. The attempt to press any translation as a standard one, while the language itself is only in the crucible and not

yet formed, and all the men capable of translating at all, are laboring under all the difficulties natural to foreigners, would be perfectly absurd. But unfortunately there is too great a tendency in the present structure of the Bible Society, to foster this authorized version system, than which nothing could be more pernicious in the present state of things. A translation adopted and printed by the Bible Society, however bad in many respects, obtains a wide circulation, as most of the copies are given to the natives gratis. With all its faults, it becomes the principal book from which the newly come Missionary learns the language, and the source of nearly all scriptural knowledge to the native Christians. Its faults are transfused into nearly all the books and tracts that are written; and in short, its influence is so great, and the prejudices of the majority from mere ignorance of its defects, are so strong in its favour, that it is exceedingly difficult to introduce any improvement. In this way the Bible Society as long as it professes to be judge, as well as distributor, becomes a clog on the wheels of improvement; for no man is willing to engage in translating; who knows that, unless he has influence enough to get the existing version set aside at once, and his own put in its place, his labors will only furnish food for the white ants, which will soon consign the best version to oblivion, if not speedily put to the press.

There is a great prejudice against multiplying translations, and it is even supposed by some, that if the heathen see different versions of the Holy

Scriptures, they will be apt to think them mere human productions, on which dependance cannot be placed. 'This supposition is founded on sheer ignorance of native opinion. They know very well that our books are but translations, and as they have many, and very different versions of their own sacred books, they are perfectly aware that an original work may be well rendered by various writers, and in various styles of writing. As they themselves take great licence in translating, they are ready to allow us much more than we ever think of taking, so that there is no danger of stumbling them on this point. It might be granted that in a country like England, where one version of great merit exists, and all the people understand, and more or less use it, it is very desirable to have only one in general use in Churches; though even in England, had several improved versions been in general use at the same time, much more sound scriptural knowledge would have prevailed, and the illusion produced by the mere sound of the same exact words, heard from infancy, would have been broken—an illusion which leads thousands of pious men to believe that they clearly understand hundreds of passages, of the real sense of which they have not the most distant conception. If the disadvantages of an authorized translation in England are considerable, especially in preventing the advance of Biblical learning, how much more must they be in India, where such learning is still in its very infancy, and where it may be ages before any

version can be produced fitted, to confer the benefits acknowledged to arise from such an one as the English.

In the mean time, all that is wanted in India, is fair and impartial encouragement in the work of revision and improvement, and there is no doubt that various translations, some in one style and some in another, according to the tastes and talents of different persons, will be produced: and, in the end, these will be gradually assimilated and amalgamated, so that the result of the whole will be some version, or revision, that by general and tacit consent will acquire the place of an authorized version. On the contrary, if the Bible Society will decide on issuing, and thus forcing into circulation only one version, approved merely by the Committee in its present incompetent state, few will feel disposed to spend their time and labor in attempting to improve the character of the translations, since the probability of having their improvements adopted, will always be against them.

It is to be hoped that the Bible Committee is already in some degree prepared for the adoption of some plan, similiar to what is above sketched, as they have already aided, by subscribing towards the publication of a version, not offered to them for entire reception, nor given over to their control or alteration. The Bombay Society has made express provision for similar cases, in which the translators may not be willing to give up the exclusive right of alteration, as they have a rule

warranting the publication of small editions of such new translations. Perhaps the best plan would be for the Missionary Societies as such, to take up the work of translation, especially the larger Societies, since they are, after all, both the translators and principal distributors of the Scriptures. I do not mean that every Society should have a separate version; but let each body of Missionaries connected with one Society, determine what existing version they will use at all their stations, where the same language is spoken; and, if no satisfactory one exists, and they have men among them able and disposed to take up the work, let them set about remedying the deficiencies of some existing translation, or making a new one, if thought necessary, which they can bring out under the sanction of the whole body of their own Brethren, and adopt at their various stations.

Suppose, in this way, there should be three translations into some of the languages, by the Church, the London, and the Baptist Missionaries, all respectively assisted more or less by the Bible Society, would any harm arise from the variety? On the contrary much good would take place. One great advantage would be, that these are permanent bodies, with a regular succession of members for life, in whose hands the versions would be safer from rash alteration, than in those of the Bible Society, the members of which are constantly changing; and, at the same time, secure of that constant and careful revision which the

longer and accumulating experience of the body might dictate.

It may be said, these would be sectarian versions, and this of all things should be avoided. None of them, however, would in all probability be more sectarian than the English authorized translation; and yet nearly all parties are agreed about using it, on account of its general excellencies, though it is well known that in various instances, fidelity in translating, has been sacrificed to the ecclesiastical views of the translators. I am as much opposed to all tampering with the renderings of Scripture as any one, but I have no fear of such sectarianism. The greatest difference on principle, is that which exists between our Baptist Brethren and us, respecting the rendering of the words relating to Baptism. Between the Churchman and Dissenter there is little difference, unless as it respects the words denoting ecclesiastical offices, and even here, the difference is not about the meaning of the words, but rather about the principle of uniformity in translating or not translating them. The version made by these three bodies, therefore would have but a very few distinguishing peculiarities, and in fact, as at present, be the mere counterparts of each other, in all, save difficult passages, where the greatest efforts of each body would be put forth, in order if possible to improve on the other. This is what should be, and without such efforts of different and competent laborers, the translations cannot be expected to reach that high state of critical correctness, at which we

ought to aim. The greater the number of versions, the higher their character may be expected to rise, and when once a number of superior ones have been brought forward, one may be found, that will likely give universal satisfaction.

A few words might be so rendered, and that most conscientiously, that it would be long before a complete assimilation took place, but as the Bible Society might assist each body in circulating its own approved version, each party would be satisfied. The Missionary bodies, or ecclesiastical bodies, where such existed, would thus be the only responsible parties, as they naturally ought to be, for the purity of the translations of Scripture used at their stations, or in their churches; while the Bible Society, acting on its truly noble and catholic principle, would extend its aid to the propagation of the Scriptures, in all the versions used by Christians deemed generally orthodox, who are willing to distribute them without note or comment.

This is in fact the principle on which the Bible Society must act, with respect to most versions into foreign tongues—for example in the South Seas, Madagascar, &c., where there are no Bible Committees, and as I think it is clear, that in this country with respect to many of the languages, such Committees cannot be expected to judge correctly, it seems the same plan might be resorted to, with great advantage to the cause. The Missionary bodies both from their biblical education, and from their being composed entirely of

men, whose whole time is given to evangelical labors in the native languages, are much better qualified, either to translate, or to judge of the merits of a translation, than any Bible Committee can as a body be expected to be, considering the elements of which, and the manner in which it is constituted, as well as the generality of its functions, and the ephemeral nature of the connexion existing between its members.

Much more might be said on this important subject, but this letter is already long enough, and the above remarks may be sufficient to give you an idea of the present state of Biblical Translations in this part of India.

Yours, &c.

W. B.

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## LETTER IX.

### THE PREPARATION OF CHRISTIAN BOOKS AND TRACTS.

DEAR FRIEND,

Next to good translations of the Scriptures in the native languages, may be considered the preparation of Christian books and tracts. This important department of Missionary labor is yet but in its infancy, as it respects the two great dialects of Northern India—the Urdu and Hindi. In the Bengali much has been done, and much



more is now being attempted, but still even in that language nothing like a good Christian library yet exists. Our brethren who labor in Bengal have, however, great advantages over us, from the long experience of their distinguished predecessors, as well as from the high acquirements of a number of their own body, who may now be ranked as men of no ordinary qualifications for the work. From the superior talents and energetic zeal of the present Missionary body in and about Calcutta, should their lives be a few years spared, great hopes may reasonably be entertained, that a considerable library of useful Christian works will be produced, so that spiritual food will be provided for the converts, and that, at the same time, the strong holds of heathenism will be most powerfully assailed, by such publications as are most calculated to move and convince the native mind.

Of the characters of the works already prepared in Bengali, I am not able from sufficient knowledge to judge, and I do not wish merely to retail the sentiments of others. There is no doubt that many, especially of the earlier attempts were very defective, so that many of the tracts scarcely deserve to be reprinted; while at the same time the experience and insight into the language and character of the people gradually acquired, have greatly improved the state of things, so that many others of the productions are well calculated to do good. But still the labor necessary before a good vernacular Christian literature can be created, even

in Bengal is immense, and will require the best attention and energies of many.

But to return to my own more direct province, the Urdu and Hindui. Here alas ! little that is satisfactory in this department is to be met with. Much more has been done in the Urdu, than in the Hindui, but many of the publications are very defective. On the list of the Calcutta Tract Society, there are rather more than thirty tracts in Urdu. Some of these are merely extracts from Scripture, such as the sermon on the Mount, Parables, &c., and of course partake of all the imperfections of the translations, from which they are taken. Some of the others are very insignificant productions, as far as their size is concerned, but on the whole, contain a correct statement of the leading truths of the Gospel. The most of the Urdu tracts, however, are of a controversial nature, directed against Mohammedanism. Some of this class are very good productions, and well calculated to confute the opponents of Christianity. But perhaps controversy has been too exclusively resorted to, and hence Christianity has appeared in the country too much in the character of an Ishmaelite, whose hand is against every man. The number of good tracts, calculated to explain and enforce the Gospel, without reference to existing superstitions, is very small. The consequence is, that almost every man who gets a Christian tract, expects to find it directed more against his own creed, or that of his neighbour, than employed for the elucidating of the principles

of any one faith. It is true, that most of these tracts are intended to show the superiority of the Gospel to the Koran, and in this some of them are very successful; but the effect of only expounding Christianity, as opposed to Islamism, produces a sort of impression, that the former is only an intruder on the domain of the latter, instead of being a more ancient and venerable system, utterly independent of, and unconnected with the errors of the Arabian Hierophant. In all probability more would have been effected on the Mohammedan mind, by tracts showing the evidences and integrity of the Christian Scriptures, and expounding their contents in all their native beauty and simplicity, without any recognition of rival creeds. It is likely that opposition would have been less excited, while the claims of the Gospel on all mankind for faith and obedience, might have been more fully enforced, and candidly listened to. I am far from wishing that any of these controversial pieces should be suppressed: I only think their number is quite disproportioned to that of purely Christian tracts. Out of twenty Urdu tracts on the list, I find seven entirely against Mohammedanism, and nearly half the remaining ones are partially so; while most of the remaining half dozen are but trifling and ill-written productions, on various subjects. In fact, nearly all the tracts of a creditable character, are refutations of Mohammedanism. The others are for the most part of an inferior order, so that though there are some very good little works, there is not

above one half of the tracts in Urdu, that would deserve publication, could any thing better be found in their place? Not a few of them are merely clumsy translations from the English, in which more English than native idioms prevail; and the thoughts are arranged and adapted more to the European than to the native mind. The Oriental reader is at once sensible that they are the productions of mere tyros in the language, and though the ideas are very good, the channel through which they are conveyed is not calculated to reach the heart.

But, if there is a deficiency of good tracts in Urdu, there is a still greater one of such in Hindui. The Missionaries of the Serampore Society have prepared a few works in this language, the distribution of which has been generally confined to the limits of their own Missions. Most of them are in dialects of the Hindui, rather too difficult for the great body of the Hindoos in most parts of the country.

On the list of the Calcutta Tract Society, I find only sixteen Hindui tracts, some of which are very small, and several of them are almost the same in substance, though a little different in plan and name. The greater number of these is by Mr. Bowley, of Chunar, and for the most part are free translations of English tracts. As far as they go, they are on the whole pretty good; but the fewness of their number, and the general sameness of their subjects, render them quite inadequate as a supply—as the Hindui is the dialect of the Hin-

doos, in like manner as the Urdu is that of the Musselmans and mixed classes, those tracts are addressed entirely to the Hindoo mind ; but works of a much higher order are required, before we can expect them to produce a powerful impression.

The meagreness of the supply of religious tracts, and the inferiority of some of the existing ones, would no doubt surprize many who are not fully aware of the fewness of Missionaries hitherto acquainted with these languages, and the peculiar disadvantages under which these few have had to labor. Seven years ago there was scarcely a single European Missionary in the country capable of writing a good Hindui tract, though not a few were pretty well acquainted with Urdu ; and even now, there are only a few individuals, of comparatively short standing. The Tract Societies could not do more than what they have done, since authors did not exist to present works for their acceptance.

Besides these publications of the Tract Society, there are a few tracts and books, published by private individuals, but the whole taken together, is very small, so that in both these most extensively spoken languages, there is yet a most lamentable scarcity of good Christian books and tracts. This scarcity has as yet arisen entirely from the want of suitable writers, as other means have not been so deficient. During the last few years, the British and Foreign Tract Society has, in the most liberal manner, been encouraging both the translating and preparation of suitable books and

tracts, and there are now a good many in progress through the stimulus thus given to the work. Could the necessary books be got ready, the means of putting them into circulation are now at hand; but it is truly distressing that, while our friends in England are so ready to assist to the utmost, the production of a good native Christian library, we are really so few in number, and so overwhelmed with other labors, that our part of the task remains unaccomplished. The few among us whose knowledge and experience among the people best qualify them for successful writing, are just the men on whom the care of the infant churches, and the greatest weight of the preaching and other Missionary labor naturally fall. Most of the Missionaries are yet juniors, struggling with the difficulties of the language, and not yet at home among the people, so that were they to engage in writing books, they would be of comparatively little value. Some of those who are able to write, are not inclined to do so, and thus the number able and disposed for authorship is very small indeed.

In this state of things, that great and powerful instrument, the press, is still weak and ineffectual for want of qualified authors and suitable works to print. Instead of having hundreds of good books to select from, for circulation, we have only a few meagre first attempts at book-making. Our position, however, is daily improving, and the facilities in this department of labor are on the increase. A Missionary body is gradually springing up in

Hindustan, similar to that in Bengal; and though for the most part composed of juniors, there is reason to hope that in a few years more, it will contain a considerable number of men whose acquaintance with the language of the people, as well as their general literary talents, will enable them to produce such works as are peculiarly required to form a valuable library of a Christian character:—one sufficiently interesting and varied to afford a fund of the most useful knowledge, calculated to edify the Christian, and destroy the prejudices of the heathen. Such a work will, however, require much united labor; and, unless the Missionary body is greatly increased, it will certainly be long before it can be accomplished. To a cause of so great importance, every Missionary Society ought to give the utmost encouragement, by granting to their Missionaries engaged in it every facility, as far as native assistance is concerned, in order to enable them to make their works as perfect as possible.

The works necessary in this country are of two kinds—viz. those intended more particularly for the heathen and Mohammedans, and those more directly intended and adapted to instruct and edify Christians. Most of the tracts &c. already prepared, may be classed among the former. In the latter department scarcely any thing has yet been done. Some larger and more elaborate works, than have yet appeared, are necessary, in order fully to refute Hinduism and Mohammedanism, the former in Hindi, and the latter in Urdu.

Other works not of a controversial character, are also required for the heathen and Musselmans in their own modes of thinking, without any polemical reference to their own creeds. Such a class of works would get a better and more candid perusal, than controversial writings, even though so constructed as to be fitted particularly for those who do not believe in Christianity. They might also be of a more popular nature than those that are more controversial; as the latter must be filled with reference to their own sacred books, whereas the former would refer more to our own Scriptures.

Besides these, a large number of well written popular tracts, are yet wanted. Some might be controversial, but the greater number had better be of an expository and hortatory character, but all written in such a style as would be most accordant to the taste, and adapted to the comprehension of the masses of the people, while the larger works would be more suited to the higher and better educated classes.

The second order of books required are those for Christians. In this department next to nothing has been done, though it is even more important than the other. However important works addressed to the heathen may be, the building up of the converts in faith and knowledge, so as to make them perfectly able to explain their religious principles, and answer every objection of the heathen among whom they dwell, is a work of even still greater moment, and ought to engage



the attention of every Missionary. To raise the Christian converts above the standard of their neighbours, both in character and knowledge, so as to give them a powerful influence over them, will readily be believed by all to be one of the most certain means of securing attention to the claims of the Gospel.

But how is this to be done by mere *viva voce* instruction? Unless the converts have the means of improving themselves at home, by reading, as well as by hearing in public, it is not likely that their progress can be very great. A large class of works is therefore required on almost every subject connected with Christian doctrine and practice, and also on Church history, and various other subjects, calculated to improve and enlarge their minds. Commentaries and Concordances, summaries of doctrine, Christian ethics, biography, accounts of the progress of the Gospel, periodical works, taking up all sorts of subjects of general or local interest calculated to benefit and enlighten those who profess Christianity,—require yet to be brought into operation. Had we well-written works on all these subjects, from hymns and catechisms for children, to elaborate books on doctrine and Biblical criticism, for the use of native preachers, in their own tongue, their influence would be immense, not only on the Christians but also on the heathen. It has often seemed that the heathen would benefit more by reading works expressly addressed to Christians, and, thus seeing what we really teach and believe, among

ourselves, than by the perusal of productions more particularly intended for themselves. In inquiring about a strange religion, we should rather consult its most current and valued books, designed for the use of its own professors, than those designed to refute objections to its truth, or to bring others within its pale.

In addition to works of these two classes, we require many, not exactly within the province of the Missionary, but still so useful in promoting the Gospel indirectly, that where there is the inclination, the spare time of a Missionary may be very well spent in preparing them. Such are school books, treatises on geography, history, astronomy, &c. By the Missionary body taking up all such subjects, they will give them a Christian tendency, or at least prevent them from having, what is not unusual in the Indian press, a sceptical tinge, under the show of liberal educational zeal. Were the Missionary body increased, and vigorously to take up the work of providing books for the native community, adapted to the state of their civilization, and powers of comprehension, they might, with the aid of the friends of the cause in Europe and America, in a few years, have nearly all the literature of the country, as far as the natives are concerned, under their influence, so as to be able to infuse into it a Christian character that would displace that of heathenism. I have formerly shewn that the native vernacular, or popular literature, is very limited, and that the natives are not able to write well in the spoken language,

while, at the same time, the use and influence of the learned languages, are on the decay. The best works are by, or under the superintendence of, the Missionaries and other Europeans. The Sanscrit, Persian, and Arabic being on the decline, and the vernaculars coming into repute, our advantages are daily becoming greater. In writing these new-formed languages we are superior to the natives, and are acknowledged to be so by many of themselves. With care, and energetic perseverance, as well as with our command of pecuniary means, and printing presses, we may completely obtain the lead, and entirely drive the heathen books from the field. In the present inefficient state of native vernacular literature, our books may soon become the standards of composition, and the European knowledge, and Christian principles contained in them, will gradually spread, and work like leaven in the mass of native mind. With a large body of able and devoted men, who would enter fully into this work, it is impossible to calculate the glorious results that might take place in the future history of India. The whole length and breadth of this field is before us, and there is nothing to prevent us from taking full possession of it. If we suffer this opportunity to pass, the Indian vernaculars, now beginning to be cultivated, may be filled with popular heathenish or infidel productions, before books of a Christian and purely moral tendency are in the field to correct their baneful influence. But if we vigorously occupy the ground now, a few years will, in all probability,

give us almost the sole direction of the literature of more than forty millions of people—to turn it to the noble purpose of imparting to them the principles of truth, and the doctrines of salvation. Let therefore the churches at home yearly enlarge their supplies of pious and talented men, that this, as well as other great objects, may be carried into effect.

Yours very truly.

W. B.

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## LETTER X.

### CONVERSION BY MEANS OF EDUCATION.

DEAR FRIEND,

The next mode of Missionary operation requiring our attention, is the Educational. On no subject have Missionaries in India been more divided, than on the relative importance of schools for heathen children, as compared with other plans of usefulness. This subject has been much discussed in this country; and it is cause of regret, that in reference to it, the utmost calmness has not been always observed. Having taken some part in this discussion at the time the question was a good deal agitated among Missionaries in India, I feel that I am treading on ground somewhat delicate, especially as some of my most valued Christian brethren, connected with another Mis-

sion, hold, and zealously propagate, opinions very different in some respects from mine. The subject is, however, so important, that it could not be passed over; and I am the more desirous of giving my sentiments fully, as I believe they are those of the whole body of the Missionaries of our Society, in Northern India, as well as most of the laborers of kindred societies in the country.

When Missionary exertions were commenced in this country by most of the Societies now in operation, the difficulties in the way of so thoroughly acquiring the language, as to be able fluently to address the natives, were much greater than now; and the long time that was necessary before a Missionary could have such confidence in himself as to embolden him to attempt direct preaching to adults, very naturally led him to look around for some way in which he might be useful, without so much delay. It very readily occurred, that by setting up day-schools, in which heathen children might be taught reading, writing, &c., through the medium of Christian books, and also receive such *viva voce* religious instruction as would be most suitable to their state, and likely to do them good, would in all probability be successful. Much difficulty was at first experienced in overcoming the prejudices of the people against allowing their children to be taught Christianity, even partially; but this was gradually surmounted by employing heathen teachers in the more mechanical part of teaching, the religious part being retained in the hands of the Missionary.

The plan once commenced, seemed in the general opinion so likely to succeed, that it soon became general; and, connected with the different societies, as well as supported and carried on by individuals, a great number of plain day-schools, adapted to the ordinary classes of the people, were rapidly formed. The friends of the cause were very sanguine in their hopes that many of the children thus taught, would, as they grew up, abandon idolatry and embrace the Gospel; and so strong was the partiality for this plan, that, at one time, the greatest part of Missionary labor, at not a few stations, and a considerable portion at all of them, was bestowed on it, while many even believed that this mode of operation was the only practicable one; and that preaching to the adult population, was not only a discouraging, but a hopeless task. The difficulty of preaching in the native language, and the warm opposition of many of the people to it, as a more direct assault on their belief, combined with the comparative ease with which schools might be either taught or superintended, were no doubt, much calculated to nourish a partiality for schools among the Missionaries; while this feeling was also greatly encouraged by the general sympathy of Europeans, both in India and at home, a great many of whom seemed to look for every thing from schools, and to expect only shame and disappointment from direct preaching to adults. The result was, that not a few almost entirely confined their attention to education and English preaching; and rested satisfied with such a knowledge of the language,

as would have been inadequate for the purposes of more general exertions.

During this era of bazar-schools, as common vernacular schools are called, to distinguish them from seminaries of a higher order, in which English, &c. are taught, there was indeed some preaching to the heathen; but the schools in general formed the most prominent part of Missionary operation, except as it respects a few who spent most of their time in laboring in various ways among the adults. Some also who spent a number of their earlier years in superintending schools, gradually turned to preaching, partly as they found themselves becoming more competent to the work, and partly in consequence of the decay of their more sanguine confidence in the educational plan.

When these schools had been carried on for a number of years, the hopes originally entertained, that they would prove successful means of conversion, began to decline. Their utility in various secondary respects has never been doubted; but as an instrument of conversion, they turned out defective. The children learned a good deal, but as far as religion was concerned, the influence of their idolatrous parents, and all the scenes of superstition and vice from which they were never separated, operated so powerfully, that, with scarcely any exceptions, they grew up as firm idolators as their parents. In fact, their very exposure to the danger of imbibing Christian sentiments, led their parents and friends to increased

efforts, in order to confirm them in their own religion ; so that while they were willing to send them to school for the sake of temporal knowledge, they took the utmost care to eradicate every new religious truth from their minds ; and if any symptom appeared of an inclination to embrace Christianity, the scholars were at once taken from school. One instance of this will suffice as a specimen. A boy in one of our schools at Benares, became very attentive and fond of reading tracts and hymns, with which he seemed at times impressed. One day he said something to his father in disparagement of idolatry, and intimated that when he grew up he would become a Christian. His father immediately took him from school ; and fixing him in the business of a boatman, sent him off to Calcutta among a set of companions who would prevent him having any thing to do with Christians. Plying hither and thither on the Ganges, without a single book or any creature near him, who knows any thing of Christianity, he has in all probability long ere this time forgot all he ever learned.

While the school system was beginning to fall in the estimation of many of the Missionaries, it received a new impulse from the arrival of the Rev. Mr. (now Dr.) Duff, and soon after, of other laborers, connected with the Church of Scotland. At this time the faith in the school system had considerably sunk ; but Mr. Duff, with great zeal, took up its cause upon ground not new, but not so generally noticed by others. He maintained that



schools were not successful in making converts principally, because the education given in them was of too limited a nature ; but that, if they were made superior institutions, in which, through the medium of English, a full education might be given in the science and literature of Europe, accompanied with a considerable degree of instruction in Christian evidence and doctrine, the overthrow of Hinduism and the establishment of Christianity, would be certain. A school therefore was formed in Calcutta on an extensive and liberal scale, to which almost the entire attention of Mr. Duff and his colleagues, as well as that of other suitable teachers, was given : and if zeal, talent, and diligence, combined with a most conscientious belief and confidence in the soundness of their plan, could have commanded success, it must in an eminent degree have attended this experiment. As far as the imparting of a good education calculated to improve the intellectual condition of the natives, forms the rule of judging of the standard to be reached, this institution has been eminently successful ; but as it respects the conversion of men to the sincere and consistent profession of faith in Christ, it has not yet given greater evidence of adaptation than some other schools of a humble and less-expensive nature.

A school on a similar plan has existed at Benares, under the charge of the Church Mission, for about twenty years, but has never directly had any converts. Lately, however, two or three who had once been pupils, have professed

Christianity at a distant station to which they had removed. The General Assembly school has also had two or three converts, but I have not heard that they are of a very satisfactory description. The other schools at the different stations, in which English and the higher branches are taught, though several of them have had individual conversions, have in general been equally ineffectual ; so that in fact the day-school system has everywhere disappointed us ; though in various ways of an indirect nature, it has no doubt had many benefits, and in no small degree tends towards the ultimate success of the Gospel. It has, however, existed in various ways, and at many places, for twenty or more years ; but the number of converts by means of it, is so small, that all the individuals could easily be named.

The principal defect of all day-schools, whether on a high or low system, for the instruction of heathen children in Christianity, is, that we can obtain scarcely any disciplinary or moral power over them. They sit on forms in a school several hours a day, and learn grammar, geography, a little history, and perhaps mathematics. Instruction in the evidences and doctrines of Christianity, forms a part of the daily task ; but there is no place for any warm affectionate interest in the subject, where it is a mere part of the routine duty of a common day-school, and taught amidst the noise and distractions of a large crowd of boys, gabbling over their lessons.

When the class hours are over, the boys disperse

in the streets of a heathen city, where they see all the sights, and join in the ceremonies of Hinduism, and return to their houses where Christianity is continually spoken of with contempt and hatred; and they are daily warned against it, and threatened, if they adopt it, with the blighting curse of their families and friends. The Christian teacher has no moral control over heathen scholars. When out of the school, which is the greater part of every day, the usual levity of children naturally leads them to think about nothing but the shows, amusements, and observances around them; most of which are more or less of a superstitious nature. Had they combined with their school instructions, attendance on the solemn services of public worship, the calm and affecting influence of daily family devotions, and the affectionate admonitions of pious parents or teachers, so placed as to have open to them the avenues of the heart at those moments when most susceptible, the case would be very different; but when the teacher sees his pupil only in the bustle of a crowded school, in the presence of all his volatile companions, and the emulation of classes composed of heathen like himself, how difficult it is to affect his heart. His head may be instructed about Christianity, and in this way schools have done a good deal; but, almost universally, the pupils look on the Gospel as merely a part of ordinary education, similar to history or geography.

It is, no doubt, true, that the plan of giving as good an education as possible, especially in

English, is more calculated to promote the reception of Christianity, or at least the overthrow of idolatry, than an education such as vernacular schools can give ; where, from the scarcity of suitable books and teachers, the means of information are much smaller. But the experiments hitherto tried, have not been satisfactory, and education of both kinds has, as yet, produced but few religious fruits.

A kind of two parties has been unhappily formed among laborers in this part of India : the larger number being disposed to put almost their entire dependance as to means, on preaching and the distribution of tracts and books ; while the<sup>d</sup> other maintains, that, at least, in the present state of things in India, schools, especially those of a rather high order, form the most hopeful mode of operation. At the head of this latter party, may be ranked Dr. Duff, whose speeches and writings on the subject, have occasioned no small portion of the discussions that have arisen. Dr. Duff is a zealous friend to preaching, and regards it as the most direct, and, at the same time, the divinely-appointed method of propagating the Gospel. On this point, therefore, he and his friends do not differ from those who take another view of the use and adaptation of schools, as means towards the evangelation of India. It is to be regretted, however, that in advocating his favorite plan of education, Dr. Duff employed such a style of depreciation in reference to the character and effects of preaching to the heathen, as well as of magni-

fication in reference to the difficulties of it—and at the same time, such unbounded confidence in his own scheme, which others of much more experience and knowledge of missions than himself, believed to have failed, before ever he came to India, that many were led to suppose that he was opposed to preaching, as in itself not suitable to Missionary work. Dr. D., it is true, gave explanations himself, and some of his colleagues did the same, which seemed to amount to a retraction of all that was peculiar in his ideas on the subject; but still the former reasonings about the comparative little value of preaching to the people in India, till we have otherwise enlightened them, were persevered in. Those who are engaged in preaching, considered their practice attacked; and they very naturally felt disposed to defend themselves—and this led them to discuss the merits of Dr. Duff's plan, and to enquire into its results, in comparison with those of preaching.

A man who, like Dr. Duff, took on himself to depreciate the principal means used by Missionaries all over the world, as well as in India, as insufficient or unsuitable to the latter country, should have been very cautious in doing so, till he had obtained the essential requisites of a judge in the case. Ignorant of the language of the natives, and unacquainted by personal intercourse with their manners and customs, as well as intellectual habits and modes of thought and feeling, he ought never to have taken on himself the office of judging, whether or not the preaching

of European Missionaries comes home to the minds of the natives. Yet he boldly decides that we can never preach, nor can they understand preaching: that, in short, they are too stupid and apathetic to be capable of being influenced either by our arguments or appeals; and that, consequently, conversion cannot be expected, till we have raised them to a higher intellectual state by imparting to them our science and literature. That Missionaries in general, who have been a few years in the country, cannot address the natives in an intelligible manner, is notoriously incorrect. In the district in which I write, there is only one Missionary out of eight who is not able to preach fluently and intelligibly; and even that one has begun to preach, though not yet a year in the country. There are some in other places, like Dr. Duff, whose attention has been turned to other objects, who of course like him have not had time, or have not taken sufficient pains to learn the language so fully as is required for preaching. We must also make an exception in favor of a good many, who are but recently come; some of whom have scarcely begun at all, and others are yet possessed of little practice or experience. These, however, are daily becoming more efficient. Every one who is acquainted with the Missionary body, knows, that with these reasonable deductions, the *preaching Missionaries*, that is, nearly all those of tolerable standing, speak intelligibly, and fluently, and generally much more grammatically than the great body of the natives themselves. The pub-

lications of the Missionaries are rapidly becoming the standard of writing, even to the natives, who in fact never cultivated literature in the vernacular tongues, till Europeans, especially the Missionaries, showed them the way. An educated native, no doubt, often speaks with a greater command of proverbial and figurative ornaments to his style; but in simplicity of diction, clearness of expression, as well as grammatical correctness, the European Missionaries, who are practiced in preaching, are generally quite their equals. The great upholders of schools go much on the ground that we cannot preach to them; and that till the magical power of the English language has given them new intellectual energies, they cannot understand; and therefore we must put all our hopes on English schools. The adults are deemed so incorrigibly stupid, that they never can understand the Gospel, even if explained to them in their own mother tongue; and yet with singular inconsistency, there is supposed to be no difficulty in teaching the children of these imbeciles all the mysteries of our language and science. The people are represented as if they were scarcely human beings, with all the common principles of our nature, to which we may address ourselves; and as if they were utterly incapable of comprehending what even the Hottentots and Esquimaux, have understood and believed: but as soon as we can make them acquainted with a few English class books, all our difficulties will, it is supposed vanish!

To Europeans, the difficulty of learning the

language is no doubt, great; and I for one, have never underrated it: but it is a difficulty which almost every educated man may, and ought to, overcome, so as to be able to preach in a clear and intelligible manner, in two years, at the utmost, if he is diligent; though it may be much longer before he is so perfect as he would wish. Some may fail, as there are individuals who never can learn a language; but if once the idea is taken up, that we never can preach, and that we must make the natives, as a preliminary, learn English, in order that we may teach them in hopes of their conversion, and of their then preaching to each other, the work will be sadly retarded. It is not, however, true that the people of India are so stupid—not even the lower orders. In every country there are many, whose gross ignorance of every thing beyond the most common wants and desires of the body, is not only lamentable, but almost incredible; and this class is not perhaps less numerous in India than in other countries; and is of course much larger than in those parts of the world most favored by religion and high civilization. Still, in general, both Hindoos and Musselmans are shrewd and intelligent. I have preached to many thousands of villages—the inhabitants of many, and widely varying districts, occupying hundreds of miles of country, where many different dialects are spoken; but though I have found difficulty in understanding some of their local peculiarities of speech, I have found no greater difficulty in getting them to comprehend the fundamental points of the



Gospel, than I have experienced among the lower orders in some of the more neglected parts of both England and Scotland, and generally not greater opposition; and though many more obstacles to conversion certainly do exist, it never seemed to me that there is any reason to be less confident of the ultimate success of the great apostolic plan of preaching the Gospel to adults in India, than in any other country. •

Dr. Duff came into contact with only a few anglicised Calcutta Hindoos and boys, who had been taught European infidelity at the Hindoo College, and thus fell into the mistake of thinking that these conceited fools, spoiled by a miserable smattering of Humeism and Voltairism, jumbled together with a mixture of Atheism, and the Indian Vedant system misunderstood, were real specimens of the people of India. Preaching to such a set of silly boys, full of self-conceit, who would not admit any principle of reason, philosophy, or common sense, he found to be hopeless, as they wished for nothing but endless wrangling. He thus concluded, that all preaching to the natives would be vain. It seems to have been entirely forgotten, that in no country are the mass of the people speculators, and that most men have more common sense than philosophical quibbles. The dogmas of philosophy falsely so called, have but little influence over the great body of society, and the absurd theories which Dr. Duff makes so great a barrier to the Gospel in India, are no more known or thought of by the majority of the people,

than by the Cornish Miners or the Highlanders of Scotland. Local practices and superstitions form most of their creed; and these will give way in India, as in other countries, to the gradually brightening light of the truth. It is quite a mistake to suppose, that with the Hindoos we have no common ground, though such may be the case with some of their speculative sceptics, all we have taught them European modes of reasoning. The Hindoo is as perfectly able to comprehend Christianity, as he is, though his conscience and principles are much and woefully corrupted by a pernicious superstition. Still he is a rational being, endowed with acute perceptions, social feelings, and discernment of right and wrong. His conscience accuses, or excuses, and though he sometimes has recourse to the doctrines of fatalism, or even atheism to defend himself against imputations of personal guilt, he rarely, if ever, has a solid belief in such theories as destroy moral responsibility. He may be addressed by a preacher in nearly the same way as ungodly men among ourselves, since he admits all the general principles of natural religion. He allows that a kind, just, and benevolent God has made all, and reigns over all; and that it is the duty of men to obey and adore him; but that depraved by sin, they do not do so. It is true, that many of the ideas of the Hindoo on these subjects, are confused, ill defined, and often mixed with gross mistakes; but he admits all the principles essential to morality, as well as the existence of the moral attributes of

God, so that we can obtain complete ground for erecting the banner of the Cross, and pressing the claims of the Gospel message on his understanding and heart. I have frequently seen audiences of pure Hindoos in tears, when their hearts have been appealed to, and their consciences addressed by Scriptural truth.

Dr. Duff has laid great stress, on the supposed difficulty of the heathen believing, till they are able to appreciate the historical evidences of Christianity. How remarkable it seems, that an intelligent man should adopt such an idea of the use of modern works on Christian evidence, founded as they all are, on peculiar circumstances that have no existence, but among certain classes of Europeans. Where was Christianity, and how was it upheld and propagated through all the centuries of its existence, before Grotius and others drew up their plans for defending it against modern doubters and sceptics? Of what use are books on the historical evidences to the great mass of pious believers in every country? Were the Hottentots, or South Sea Islanders first taught, as Dr. D. proposes to teach Hindoo boys to refute the sophistry of Voltaire and Paine before they believed? Were they not rather addressed on the subject of their own sinfulness, and their responsibility to the great God who created them; and was not the way of mercy through Christ, announced to them as a matter of fact, on which the preachers to shew their own belief, were willing to rest their own hopes of eternal blessedness?

Were not the better feelings of their nature, such as gratitude and love, appealed to, to draw them to him who first loved them? And were not their fears of future evil addressed, in order to induce them "to lay hold on the hope set before them in the Gospel."? Were not, and are not such subjects level to the comprehension of every class of men, and have they not in all ages and in every country, been the most direct and powerful means of bringing men "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God."? Who ever heard that any man was brought an inch nearer heaven, by being made a little better acquainted than his neighbours, with history, geography, or mathematics?

I hope I shall not be misunderstood, as wishing to depreciate education. I am far from thinking meanly of it, as a means towards the conversion of the natives. A good education will certainly undermine idolatry, and do much to prepare the way for Christianity. I only object to the plan of making it a substitute, even in the present state of things, for preaching. As an ally of the preacher, the school-master no doubt will do much; but though he assists greatly in forming the mind to reason, and reflect on subjects brought before it, and even communicates much that is important, as tending to the production of Christian character, so that the educated man if once converted, will in all probability, though not necessarily, be a more stedfast, and useful Christian, than one who has not such advantages, still

it is not to the school-master, but the preacher that we are to look, for the production of those deep and permanent impressions on religious subjects, likely to end in genuine conversion. The school may do much to improve the minds of the heathen youth, so as to make them better able to understand the doctrines of the Gospel; but if left with their schooling only, little is to be expected, and it happens more frequently, perhaps, than otherwise, that those who have received Christian instruction in day schools, but were never separated from their heathen families, became, as they grew up, even more hostile to Christianity than those educated merely in the native way. They are more afraid than others of being thought Christians, and hence are anxious to clear themselves, by using their knowledge to misrepresent and distort the doctrines they have learned. This I know to be the case with many: but to what extent it may be so with the pupils of the Calcutta seminaries, I am not aware; but from much that I have seen and heard of them, I fear there are many of them in a similar state.

Those who so much advocate the school system do not, however, despise preaching, though advantage has been taken of their statements by many worldly men hostile to preaching, who have gladly seized on the idea, and greatly exaggerated it,—that there were Missionaries who thought the heathen could not be converted, but by education. Dr. Duff's name has been used, and he has been represented as putting more trust in science than

in religion, for the conversion of the natives, and as particularly opposed to the fanatical scheme of preaching the Gospel. Every one, however, of his brethren know that he would in this respect have been as fanatical as the rest; for he and his colleagues have always admitted that preaching is the principal means of conversion; but they have also maintained that the preachers must be natives, and that these we can best raise up and qualify by means of schools. We must have a body of well educated and pious native agents, before we can do much good, as no country was ever converted by foreigners, and therefore it is presumed that to educate natives for the work, is first to be thought of. It is certainly true, that no country was ever evangelized by foreigners, that is generally—but there are few or no countries, where the first churches, the germ of their Christianity, have not been planted by foreigners—aye and that by the preaching of foreigners. The native agents who afterwards carried on the work, have generally been brought forward in the way most common in Christian countries,—the selection of pious youths from among those who professed the truth, and their special education for the ministry.

It seems rather more than we could expect, were we to succeed in making a day school, where none but heathen boys attend a few hours a day, and where even some of the teachers are heathen, a good nursery for the Christian ministry, so long as they are entirely under the guardianship of their Hindoo, or Mus-

selman parents, who only allow them to be taught lessons on religion, as the fee for their general instruction. It is very probable that out of many hundreds of pupils, there may be a few converts, and out of that few, one or two, who will be able to preach the Gospel, but it seems a very indirect way to raise up preachers. The Benares free-school on the same plan, during the twenty years it has been in operation with, 120 to 150 scholars, has not only not produced a single native preacher, but not even a convert directly. According to Dr. Duff's theory, this has arisen from the education not being so thorough as it should be. It has, however, been as good an education as is generally given in English schools in India, not excepting that of the church of Scotland, unless as it respects mathematics, and political economy, more of which are taught in the latter; but as to the religious part, I have repeatedly heard well qualified persons, who knew both, say, 'That though the pupils of the Assembly's schools might have more knowledge of systematic theology, those of the Benares institution were superior to them in acquaintance with sound scriptural information.' I certainly know of no principles in the system pursued in the Assembly's school, different from those tried and found inefficient in others, though its principal supporters have often asserted that it was unique in its plan, and ought not to be judged prospectively by the past history of others. They maintained, that though other schools have failed as direct means of conversion, there is some-

thing about their plan that almost to a certainty will succeed, not only in producing a body of converts, but also a body of peculiarly qualified preachers, so that we may safely wait as to preaching, till natives are raised up who will do it better than it is possible for us to do it. By this, one is forcibly reminded of a favorite theory of Bonaparte's, by which he expected to be able to train soldiers to be seamen, in the wet docks of Antwerp, who when trained, would at once sweep from the face of the ocean, the gigantic navy of England, reared and brought to maturity amidst the storms of a hundred seas, and perfected by ages of experience.

The youths, according to this plan, are in the first place anglicised for years, in order to make them fit to receive instruction in the language of their teachers, who can teach in no other. Thus they become English scholars, but are rude and unpolished in their native language, which, to a great extent, is sacrificed, to make way for a foreign tongue. They are therefore rendered unfit, by their whole education being English, and all their knowledge got through a foreign channel, to communicate what they know to their countrymen, suppose they themselves became Christians. Their adoption for the most part of European habits, and even European pride, and the general incongruity of their feelings with those of others, whose characters are purely native, render them in general any thing but good instruments for benefiting their countrymen.



One great obstacle in the way of raising up native preachers, without ourselves being able to preach in their own language, into which Christianity is but partially infused, is, that it requires a great deal of knowledge and skill in the art, so that while we instruct an Indian youth, and bring him on so far, that he may make a discourse in English, where will he have models to form himself on as a *native preacher* where every thing must be done in a different way? On the other hand, when a Mission is carried on principally by preaching Missionaries, the native Brethren who preach, or the youths who are being educated for the work, are the constant hearers of men experienced in it. They have thus models before them, and as natives are all imitators, it is remarkable how soon some of them become very good speakers; but give them matter in English, and leave them to find out the way of expressing, and enforcing it in another language, and they make lamentable work. Without getting a great deal of their religious knowledge and impressions through the medium of their own tongue, and being quite familiar with the methods of using it in religious discourse, which they can only be in the first instance, by having good European models to imitate, it seems next to impossible that any young man among them, who has got all his ideas from the English, should be able to succeed as a preacher. Strange as it may appear, there is no doubt that most young men thus educated would preach better in English, than in their own mother

tongue. In English they often write not bad essays; but set them to write in the vernacular, and they produce nothing—but gibberish. There are no doubt exceptions, but such is notoriously the case with most of the best scholars of the English schools and colleges.

Thus, even supposing this very expensive system of Mission schools for the heathen to be more successful than it has ever been, it does not seem to be the most likely way of raising up good native laborers. The peculiar habits of a native, brought up as such, without being taught to ape European manners, are of great value to a native evangelist. Those who hear us, treat us with respect, and make allowances for our habits as foreigners; but they have a decided dislike to any native Christian, who wishes to ‘act the European.’ Hence the lads educated and anglicised in the semi-European town of Calcutta, are looked on with contempt in the interior, as a race whose character is very doubtful, and though in respect of knowledge, they are generally superior to many others, they are not exactly the men from whom much good can be expected in other parts of the country.

Yours, &c.

W. B.

## LETTER XI.

## CHRISTIAN BOARDING OR ORPHAN SCHOOLS.

DEAR FRIEND,

The question now occurs what is the proper province of the Missionary with respect to education? Is he to leave it entirely to others, and confine himself to preaching the Gospel to the heathen, teaching, and building up the converts, and preparing translations and books calculated to benefit those who believe, and convince those who do not? I should say, the above are certainly the principal duties of a Missionary in India; but still an important field is open to him in the department of education. But the plan of Missionary education, I think, should be confined principally to the instruction of such children or youths as can be brought under a system of complete moral control and discipline, having no one to stand between them and their instructors. Unless we get the children entirely into our hands, to bring them up as Christians fully separated from all heathenism, the spiritual benefits arising from schools, seem scarcely so great as to warrant the devoting to them, the time and attention of ministers sent specially to preach the Gospel.

The class to which I refer, are the children of native Christians; orphans who have no heathen connexion to claim them; and such as may be freely given up by their relations to be brought

up by the Missionaries in the Christian faith. The great advantage of schools composed of these classes is, that we can get the children entirely under our own management night and day. They never learn the ways of the heathen at all; but are brought up as the children of Christian parents. They are taken to public and family worship, and learn daily the doctrines and precepts, as well as the language of Scripture, and every influence of a religious nature is brought to bear on their minds without any heathenish influence, as in the case of day schools, to counteract it. The number of schools on this plan, where the children, either male or female, are entirely under the care of their teachers, and entirely separate from the heathen, is greatly increasing; and, though yet but of short standing, in general, they give great promise of being excellent nurseries for teachers and preachers, as well as for well-taught and enlightened private Christians. There are already at least 1000 interesting youths under this sort of instruction at the different stations in Northern India, almost all of whom have been baptized; a number of them are the children of native Christians; but the far greater number are Orphans, collected at different places where famine or other calamities have thrown them on the public. At Benares we have four such schools, two for boys and two for girls, one of each kind connected with the Church Society, and one of each with the London Society. The largest one, and that of longest standing, is under the superintendence of

the Rev. C. B. Leupolt, of the Church Society, and is a most excellent institution. A number of the boys already give decided signs of piety, and bid fair to be useful. There are in all these schools nearly 400 pupils thus adopted and brought up by the Church of God.

We were induced to adopt this plan in preference to the day school system, by the great success which we were informed had attended similar institutions in Ceylon, Bangalore, and various other places. Already a very considerable number of youths, educated in this way, are making known the Gospel to their countrymen, and others are receiving particular instructions with a view to be so employed.

According to this plan all the children are at least nominal Christians, fully instructed in the Scriptures, and well educated in other respects. Being brought up entirely under our eye night and day, and kept out of heathen society, their whole intellectual character and all their ideas are different from the heathen.

What they learn of idolatry is only what may teach them to dislike and shun it, or prepare them for refuting the arguments by which it is defended. Every prejudice which they may fall into, is naturally opposite to those of the heathen.

The consequence is, these youths receive all the peculiar impress of Christianity, so that they become quite a distinct class, with all those manly characteristics which distinguish a Christian from a heathen community. The trammels and preju-

dices of caste, they never think of, but with minds quite unfettered by the vulgar superstitions of the country, are at once prepared, should they through divine grace experience a change of heart, to become valuable teachers among their countrymen.

These schools, therefore, form an excellent adjunct to every mission. Where the work has advanced a good way, by other means, they are much required for the children of the converts, so that no ground may be lost, and no family once professing Christianity, be allowed to fall back among the heathen, a result which likely would take place in many cases if the children were left ill instructed, and exposed to all the temptations incident to their state, as a handful scattered about over the wide extent of society. Though a small plant may come to maturity in a few weeks, it is not so with the wide spreading trees of the forest; and in the same way, in a very limited state of society, a decided revolution of sentiment and feeling may often be produced in a very short time, while, in a country like India, the steps towards such a change are slow, and difficult. Hence, while it is our duty to press on the work, with the most ardent zeal for immediate success, we must, at the same time, cautiously adopt such plans, as shall be of a permanent nature, and lead to the foundation of such institutions as are best calculated to secure every acquisition; and thoroughly, as far as human means are capable of doing so, give Christianity a firm hold of the

affections and social habits of the people. All their knowledge and early associations, whether temporal or spiritual, require to be dissevered from the low and degrading superstitions abounding around them, and so connected with the doctrines and precepts of Christianity, and imbued with its high and holy principles, as to impress a completely different mental and moral character upon them; and, in short, without altering their national peculiarities so far as physical causes may naturally make them a people widely different from us, to really new-model them socially and individually, in all that constitutes the spiritual as well as intellectual being. This is a task of no ordinary magnitude, and few who take an interest in missions are able to estimate it: no one mode of operation can accomplish it. A large combination of means and plans is necessary, by which, from the cradle to the grave, men may be held under the control of truth and virtue, and their intellectual vision cleared from the films of vice and ignorance, by the constantly operating agency of pure principles, bearing on their minds in every way, to control and direct the whole bent of their natures, and stamp on their souls, all that is generous and good, as well as producing in them a deep and unconquerable faith that will elevate them above the mean and grovelling selfishness, universal among all heathen nations.

Such a character as Christianity has no doubt stamped on thousands of its most favored subjects in lands where it has long moulded the whole

social system, and been developed in all its fulness, is not likely often to be found where heathenism has been the guide and preceptor in early years, and the Gospel has only been the last refuge when doubt and distrust had taken the place of credulity, and late efforts to be a new man in Christ had to contend with all the habits and prejudices of childhood, youth, and age. Hence the characters of adult converts, even when on all essential points good, are often stained with a certain tinge of heathenism.

We feel and acknowledge a man to be a genuine Christian, and yet there is about him much that does not harmonize with Christian modes of thought or action. Instances there are in which some persons seem in a remarkable way to throw off the whole of heathenism, and at once, as it were, to clothe themselves in a completely consistent Christian dress; but such instances are rare. The system of boarding schools, under the constant and direct management of Missionaries, seems, of all things, the most likely plan for raising up a nucleus of young Christians, on whom the "mark of the beast," has never been impressed; and who, even when their own parents are converts, may escape most of the remaining taint of early corruption in their social habits, which but few adults can entirely get clear of, by their being placed in a situation from which such evil influences are shut out. As this nucleus enlarges, every new convert comes among a body of people so entirely Christian in all their ideas, that he is



at once conscious of a most remarkable change in all his company, and associations; whereas had they all been adult converts, like himself, instead of being educated entirely on Christian principles, a strong sympathy with many sentiments and customs, by no means of a pure tendency, would be found among them, and his adoption of the whole Christian character, becomes, naturally, from example, less complete. The young, thus educated, are rapidly becoming the stay of the native churches; and thus also, these churches become much better fitted for opening to new converts of adult years, such sources of comfort and improvement as must be exceedingly more favorable to their advancement and consolidation in their new religion, than where all were like themselves, deserters from one faith, and neophytes in another. But one of the most important objects to be accomplished by these schools, is the training up of men, not only thoroughly Christianized as far as human means are able to do so, but thoroughly educated for the work of ministers and teachers. To this great object the education given is particularly directed, in all cases where the talents of the pupils give any reason to hope that they may, in the event of becoming really pious, be qualified for the work. Hence they are fully taught in their own language, the truths and precepts of Scripture; and from their almost daily attendance on the preaching and devotional exercises of the various Missionaries, they become quite able to put religious sentiments into the language of the country,

while at the same time, they receive such an education in English, as gives them the power of reading and consulting such works as will furnish them with ideas on all those subjects which are calculated to improve their minds, and make them vehicles for communicating a great fund of Christian and useful knowledge to their countrymen.

In several parts of India, these youths have begun to preach the Gospel; and in others, classes are in a state of preparation. A few years more, and the seminaries at present filled with interesting lads, rescued entirely from heathenism, and brought up with the faith and prayers of the Church, in the daily study of Divine truth, and under a careful moral discipline, as well as in the reception of an excellent secular education, will be sending forth large bands of promising young men in various capacities, of a stamp and character different from every class of men existing in the country. It is impossible that the tuition of a day school, could transform heathen boys living with their parents, or even Christian children living with parents recently converted, and still having many of their old habits, into any thing like the pupils of these schools, where order and moral restraint go along with hourly instruction and advice, and where the scenes of evil so universally prevalent, are not tolerated, so as to have a continual corrupting influence.

Indeed, the difference between the youths thus taught, and others, is so remarkable, that one observing it can scarcely believe them to be of the same nation. Every year the number of the boys

as well as of girls, is increasing so rapidly, and Missionary school-funds are passing over to this department so much, that it is doubtful if there will after a very few years be any other sort of schools conducted by Missionaries. Not that they are unfriendly to other plans more particularly intended for the education of the heathen ; but simply, that their means are limited, and their object definite ; and the fact that they can get as many as they can teach, of such classes as may be baptized, and brought up professedly as Christians, renders it obviously their first duty to give most attention to those who come entirely under their control, direction, and complete pastoral care ; since these are not only most likely to become genuine Christians, but, from their peculiar advantages, the most useful men.

One of the most important parts of the boarding school plan, is, that in all the larger institutions of the kind, it is intended that Theological academies be formed, for the more perfect education of young men for the Christian Ministry, into which only such may be received as are decidedly pious, and possessed of suitable talents for being Pastors and Evangelists. Some of these academies have already begun operations, and others will gradually be formed ; and I do not despair of seeing in a few years, such institutions at Benares, and other places in India, as those by which our churches at home are supplied with pious and efficient preachers, and the foreign Missions with devoted laborers. The accomplishment of this

object in India, however, evidently requires from the circumstances of the case, and the awful moral atmosphere around, that we should take up the candidates at an earlier date, and by attending with the utmost care and solicitude to their juvenile training, try to secure them to Christ, and then bring them on to be his ministers. We have not here the numerous and well organized churches, the faithful pastors, pious parents, and devout teachers by which so many youths in England are so far brought forward as to be offered in a state of no small maturity for the service of the sanctuary, so that little more remains to be done, but to give them some additional instruction in the higher branches of human knowledge and Theological learning. We cannot get those, on whose minds truth and holiness are already engraved: all we can reach is to get such as are not yet steeped in heathen pollution, and on whose hearts we may, by all scriptural means, and the gracious aid of the Spirit of truth, impress Gospel truth and holiness. Where neither consistent conversion takes place, nor talents exist, we would not make any effort to put men in the ministry; but all experience shows that there is much reason to hope, that where the utmost exertions of a truly Christian character are used in a family, conversion will in general take place. These seminaries are conducted on the principle of a family in close conjunction with pastoral care, and bring the children into a situation similar to the most favored one

of families in a pious Christian farm. From a large body of pupils so educated on Christian principles, it is not too much to hope that a good number will always be found suitable for the ministry, and experience, as far as it has gone, has not disappointed us.

On this class, our greatest hopes for a Gospel ministry for India, are now placed. Adult converts may often be useful in propagating the Gospel; but they are not seldom deficient in knowledge and regularity of habits, and as pastors they scarcely ever succeed. In these respects the youths of the seminaries are, from their long subjection to rule, and their far more extensive education, much more likely to be superior; while their habits of order and propriety, make them far better fitted for presenting examples of Christian character.

The plan of thus adopting and boarding, as well as educating the children, is no doubt liable to the objection (the only one ever heard against it), of involving a much greater expense than day-schools. It would, certainly, be cheaper to educate only such as can at least board themselves, if not also pay for instruction; but were we only to do so, our object, as has been shown, could rarely be obtained—the securing the absence of all heathen influence, and the presence of nothing but Christian influence, and the consequent certain nominal Christianity of all, and the well-grounded hope of the real Christianity of many. If, at a given expense, we can raise up a hundred well-educated

young men, baptized into the Church as children, and professing themselves Christians, and a number of them doing so in sincerity when they come up, would it not be better than to lay out the same in giving a crude education to double the number of heathen boys who will soon be scattered away from us, and forget or despise all they ever learned of our religion. But the expense of educating on the boarding plan, is not great in India. A boy may be boarded and clothed for about £3 a year; and, as children in this country are remarkably docile and teachable, if the school is large, the expense of teaching is but little for each, since most of the work can be done by monitors, save in the higher classes; and these are often taken by the Missionaries themselves. In Missionary schools every thing is done with the utmost economy. The pupils are fed and clothed in a plain style, but appropriate to their station; so that to carry on a school of two or three hundred of both sexes—a most delightful nursery for our infant churches—immense funds are not required, though such an undertaking requires more than we can raise on the spot. I shall quit this subject with an expression of my hopes, that it will engage much attention at home, and that many will be found to assist in bringing up these interesting proteges of the Church. Who that has the means, would grudge £3 a year to educate a soul for heaven, who might otherwise never have heard of salvation; and who perhaps, by doing so, is at the same time bringing forward a youth of

piety and talent to proclaim the Gospel to the perishing millions of India.

Yours &c.

W. B.

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## LETTER XII.

### FEMALE EDUCATION.

DEAR FRIEND,

One important subject connected with Indian Missions, is Female Education. The influence of women in all states of Society is so great, that every philanthropist must be anxious to turn it into such a channel as will be most for the good of mankind. In a former letter, the influence of Indian female society has been considered, as it respects its opposition to the Gospel, or to the conversion of the people. Indeed it has all along been so manifest to the friends of the cause, that its state was one of the greatest obstacles to Christianity, that, on no subject have the good and pious been more unanimous than in making some attempts to teach and improve native female Society.

No part of the Missionary work, however, has been more difficult, and as yet more unsuccessful in bringing heathens to the saving knowledge of Christ. The history of the female schools would appear, if recited, merely a repetition of that of

Bazar schools for boys—great hopes at first, and disappointment at last—and then the adoption of the more contracted, but sure system of Christian and orphan institutions, where all are to a certainty brought up in the Christian faith, with scarcely any possibility of their becoming heathen. The most distinguished laborer in this department of the work, has for many years been Mrs. Wilson, of Calcutta. Never has India seen a more zealous, devoted, and persevering laborer, than this excellent lady; and though she has had to struggle with innumerable difficulties, thousands yet unborn may have to bless God that ever she came to the country. Mrs. Wilson, (then Miss Cooke,) began her efforts by establishing a number of small bazar schools which were carried on some time, but did not answer her expectations. After a good deal of experience she gave up these, and commenced a large school which she named, The Central Female School. For this institution, an excellent house was built, with accommodations for teachers, school rooms, and a suitable place for a class of female orphans, to be educated entirely as Christians. This school contained, I think, generally about 200 heathen girls, who were taught by Mrs. W. and her assistants, in a way which left nothing to wish for, but that the girls should be removed from heathen influence at home, where the hours not spent in school are daily to be passed, and brought entirely under the Christian control of their devoted teachers. Some instances of positive conversion took place under Mrs. W.'s teaching, and



many more, of general improvement of character while the pupils remained heathen; and on the whole, Mrs. W. has much reason to be thankful for the measure of good effected, though no doubt much less than what she once, in common with others, hoped for, from the school system. Finding that her orphan class was gradually increasing, and that they presented a much greater prospect of usefulness than mere heathen day-scholars, she separated them from the heathen; and having obtained a suitable spot, and the aid of many friends, she formed a new institution a few miles from Calcutta, and began to devote her entire labors to the Orphan Female Asylum. I saw her Institution about a year ago, along with several other Brethren. We called not on a day when a spectacle was got up for visitors, but merely as we happened to pass, and were all delighted with the order and regularity of the institution, the clean and healthy appearance of the girls, and the comfort and happiness that seemed to pervade the establishment. There were rather more than a hundred girls; and no one who feels the power of Christianity could fail of being delighted to hear so many young voices raised in singing the praises of God in their own tongue; and reflect that these children, the offspring of heathen, are being brought up in the midst of heathenism, without being allowed to imbibe one of its superstitious doctrines, but have their minds even from infancy deeply imbued with the pure and holy principles of the Gospel, and their eyes directed to the purest

models of Christian female character. Who can calculate the effect of all the hidden influences of such an institution? Already a considerable number have been well educated in this institution, and have been married to native Christians connected with the different Missions in and about Calcutta. In this way native Christian society is likely to receive great improvement from the gradual impression produced by a number of young women, carefully and piously educated. The families of new converts, as might be expected, have many things about them which are far from being correct; and the low grade of the women is much against their improvement, so that the influence of these well-instructed girls, when they become wives and mothers, cannot fail of doing much toward their moral elevation.

I have particularly noticed Mrs. W.'s school in preference to others of the same class, as it has hitherto been the largest, has reached a higher state of efficiency, and has already realized to some considerable degree, the objects proposed. There are now, however, similar schools in connexion with almost every Mission, where the girls are kept night and day under superintendence, and where the pupils are all either the children of native Christians, or orphans who are adopted as it were by the Christian Church, and brought up entirely in its doctrines and precepts. Some of these schools have already effected much; but as yet most of them are only in their infancy, having but few scholars, and these the first they have had.

They are gradually, however, advancing in numbers and efficiency, and are looked forward to with great hopes, which, from the success already attending the plan where it has been carried on for some time, are likely to be fulfilled. From the history of Mrs. Wilson's efforts, a pretty correct idea may be formed of the changes that have passed over the opinions of those practically engaged in the work of female education. These, it will be seen, are very much the same as those that have marked the history of other Missionary schools. Mrs. W. first began with small bazar schools, taught by subordinate teachers, and superintended by herself and other ladies. After a good deal of experience of this plan, it was given up for that of one large and vigorously-conducted school, in which, under the direct instruction of European ladies, there might be a much more complete system of education. This again, though not yet abandoned, is found to yield but little fruit; and the system of devoting most attention to Christian and orphan girls, all of whom can be fully secured against heathen contamination, by being boarded and fully taught as Christians, is ultimately preferred, as giving far greater certainty of lasting success. Indeed it is almost certain, that no pupil of such a seminary will, in adult years, go over to the heathen. They would scarcely ever imagine such a thing, since all their connexions are now Christian; and they know next to nothing of either the doctrines of heathenism, or the people who possess it, and can hold scarcely any social intercourse with

them. One defect, however, of the plan of Mrs. W.'s Orphan Asylum, appears to me to deserve notice, and that is its want of any direct connexion with one or the other of the Mission stations or Societies. This I conceive to be a detriment to its usefulness, as the girls are scattered about when they leave the school; which, as they are married so early in India, is always at a premature age, as far as respects their being able to conduct themselves with much discretion. Thus they are removed from the guardianship of those who have taught and watched them, and whose influence over them for good, is far greater than can ever be expected to be obtained by others. Were the school, on the contrary, a part of the operations of a Mission, where there are similar ones for boys; and also a Church of converts from the heathen, and of others brought up as Christians, the girls would in general be married to the converts, or to youths like themselves brought up in the schools; and thus they would become amalgamated with the congregation, without being removed from the society to which they had been accustomed, and the kind advice and salutary moral control of the teachers to whom they were wont to look up with love and respect, as to their foster parents. A Mission with schools like this, with several hundred Christian scholars, will naturally in a few years have a large Christian congregation, even should conversions from the adult heathen be rare; and if the conversions from the heathen are considerable, how important is it that the new con-

verts should come into the midst of a society where so many young people, male and female, are well instructed in all the doctrines and duties of religion ! By the close combination of all the different modes of operation, the greatest improvement may be expected. Preaching to the heathen, the preparation of books, &c. and the carrying on of Christian schools, should all be in concert. The preacher, unless he has a Christian Church, into which he can bring his converts, will never be very successful ; nor will the teacher of youth be gladdened by seeing the young neophyte growing up into the staid Christian, unless the pastor and the church are at hand to extend the cause of spiritual discipline, instruction, and example, in such a way as to make the step from the school to the higher classes of the Church of Christ, easy and natural. The school should be made the mere initiatory class to the church ; but if in a country like this, the pupils before being confirmed in character and principle, are scattered, some to distant churches where they have no connexions, and some to places where there are no churches at all, much of the seed sown will be lost. I am aware that Mrs. W. has labored hard to remedy this evil ; but as long as her institution is not a branch of some permanent and vigorous Mission, the objection will in some degree remain. It is to be hoped that this school, which has been so zealously supported hitherto by the exertions of Mrs. W. alone, will yet be joined to the Church Mission, or some of the other Missions, best able

to sustain it in a permanent form. The defect on which these remarks are made, does not exist in the other schools of the same kind, as they are for the most part connected with Mission stations, and conducted principally by the Missionaries' wives. They are however, as before observed, not so far advanced as Mrs. W.'s, though some of them are now in a very high state of efficiency, and in a few years may be quite equal to the Calcutta Institution.

Besides a number in Calcutta, there are female boarding and orphan schools in Burdwan, Benares, Gorukpore, Chunar, Mirzapore, Allahabad, Cawnpore, Agra, &c. The number of pupils thus brought up in the faith of Christ, is not at present ascertainable, but is very considerable. Perhaps little short of a thousand girls have in this way been adopted into the church within the last few years, besides the heathen girls taught in the day schools, who still live at home with their parents. In this number, however, I include a portion of the children of native Christians, who are brought up with the orphans, and others who are in pious families. The friends of the cause are quite unanimous in promoting this object, and in a few years more, it is hoped these schools will become excellent nurseries for the native churches.

The difficulty of raising sufficient funds in India will, however, limit our efforts, unless there be considerable aid received from home: but there is no doubt, that the ladies will consider this mode of applying their zeal, so promising, that they

will make efforts to aid a cause so generally approved by those on the spot.

In treating of female education in India, it would be an oversight not to notice the praiseworthy and zealous efforts of the ladies in England in forwarding the cause. To them, native Christians in India, will owe much for the means of having their children educated, in a way calculated to raise them so much above their country-women in general; and also many of the new converts will have great cause of gratitude, that from among the orphans thus educated, they are able to obtain wives so much better fitted to be domestic companions to a Christian, than any woman brought up among the heathen.

The Society formed some years ago in London by the ladies for the advancement of female education has done good, and is likely to do much more good in India. There is one part of the plan, however, of this excellent Society, respecting which the ladies seem to have been ill-advised, and that is, the sending out of young ladies to engage in native education. This part of their plan is exceedingly expensive, and not, so far as I am aware, required for any part of India. What is generally wanted is not European agents, such as this Society sends out; but funds to enable those who are engaged in the work, such as the wives of Missionaries, and other pious ladies, who require no salaries, to employ subordinate agents to carry on the mere mechanical part of the work: they themselves being quite adequate to the super-

intendance. There are many ladies born in India, and able to speak the native languages better than European ladies can be expected to do, and who do not require one half, and sometimes not above one third of the salary necessary for the former. These are ready and willing to be thus employed, and many would be glad to have openings for such employment; but in general the funds are small, and comparatively subordinate agents are all that can be obtained—all responsibilities being borne by the gratuitous laborers. Perhaps at Calcutta, Madras, or Bombay, there may be some need for one or two such ladies, and yet I cannot comprehend how it can be; as one half,—aye, three fourths of the ladies, whom we are bound, from their Christian character to believe willing, and whom we know to be able to carry on all the schools required, are quite unemployed. It is clear, however that the plan is utterly futile from another cause: the ladies themselves, as soon as they come to India, either from finding that they are not required, or that they may benefit the cause more by becoming wives and mothers, take to matrimony, with as much readiness, if it is within their reach, as if this had been the principal object of the Society in sending them out. The Society has been in operation for several years, but I am not aware that any one has continued unmarried the whole of the period, which it is understood they are expected by their patronesses in England to do, though I suppose they are under no particular engagement. Of all who have come out to



Northern India, only one continues unmarried, though one or two of the others still assist in the schools. I do not at all find fault with the ladies for this: it is better under all circumstances that they should do so.

It is not desirable that unmarried ladies should be in India at all, except under the care of relations, their natural protectors; and therefore I think it wise in them so to act, when they find what is the state of things, and what the small extent of good is, which any woman can do, unless she has the support of a husband to give respectability to her name, in a country where an unmarried woman, if young, is regarded only as a child, and therefore can have but little influence, and but little sphere of action. The object of the ladies' plan is certainly not merely to provide good wives for pious men in India, though this in itself may be a very good object: but this has as yet been the principal result of the scheme of sending out teachers. If they would take the advice of a friend, they will at once abandon this part of their plan. I can assure them, unmarried ladies are not required as teachers. They are only a burden on their friends, and on the cause, the funds of which are not sufficient to support them; and hence those to whom they are sent, are glad to get quit of them as soon as possible. It is true some of those engaged in female education have advised the sending out of these ladies: perhaps in one or two cases they required them, but the readiness with which they have consented to, and even pro-

moted their marriages, speaks volumes, and shows how much they have felt that the plan did not work. I have heard from some of those who advised the ladies to send them, such expressions as clearly showed that they were principally influenced by the desire of not discouraging any zealous effort, lest it should check the ardour of their female friends, and lead them to relax their exertions. I hope nothing which I have written will tend to lead to any relaxing of zeal for female education in India. If such were to be the case, my whole object in writing about it would be defeated. No! I would say to the ladies redouble your exertions. Your labors will in a few years produce a rich harvest, but it is not such teachers as you can send that India wants.

Thank God there are many ladies in this country whose hearts are devoted to the work, and who can give their labors gratuitously. But they require all the aid in funds that you can give them, to enable them to feed and clothe the orphans, to get school houses, subordinate teachers, school books, &c. If we had the means of supporting them, we can get agents; and to the supply of funds you should bend your attention, accompanying all your efforts with ardent prayer for success.

In sending out aid to the schools, it would be well also for our female friends, as far as possible to send it in money rather than in fancy articles. These are things but little sought for in India;

and, in most cases, they would bring more at home, so that by disposing of their labors themselves, and sending out what was realized, they would likely do more good, as well as save no small trouble. In the various schools in India, work is done by the girls of the same kind, and also many ladies work for the benefit of the funds; so that the market for fancy articles is overstocked, without having any more sent from Europe. The case however is very different with *useful articles*, such as clothing for children, &c., which are sought after by European families, and also as it respects materials to be worked up by the girls in the schools, such as worsteds, canvas, &c. &c.; such things cost high in India, and are sometimes, I understand, not easily obtained. In other respects the greatest wants of our female schools, are funds, and subordinate teachers. The former, our friends at home can, and we hope will greatly aid us in, and the supply of the latter we must look for here; but the removal of the first want, will enable us soon to get clear of the other, since the supply of teachers keeps more or less pace with the power of supporting them. In many places the girls already educated are able to teach, and the number of such is daily increasing. It is of the utmost importance that this interesting department of labor should now be taken up with more vigor than ever, since a great many girls are now found who can be brought up in a Christian way, and be for ever detached from heathen families. If our hopes of improving the state of the female por-

tion of heathen Society are few, we have no such obstacles in the way of giving to *Christian* and *orphan* girls such an education as will make them as wives and mothers, an ornament to their profession.

How many families may thus be blessed, we cannot calculate; but one thing is certain, that by raising the standard of female character, we improve the very ground work of society, and introduce the principles of Christianity, to watch both the cradle of the infant, and to preside over all the domestic arrangements which so deeply effect the interests of the man. It may be a long and laborious work, but let it be persevered in, and it will be successful. The long degraded families of India will present a new aspect, and the female character, so long despised, will be raised to be the standard of worth and loveliness, so that women instead of being one of the greatest barriers to the progress of the Gospel, will become, as thousands of them are in our own favored land, the most powerful auxiliaries of truth and godliness.

Yours, &c.

W. B.

## LETTER XIII.

## GOVERNMENT PLAN OF EDUCATION.

DEAR FRIEND,

When the extensive and populous regions of India first came by a most extraordinary train of events into the hands of the East India Company, that body had little idea of how these vast countries were to be governed. The precarious tenure by which they were held, and the naturally commercial character of the conquerors, made them confine most of their attention to matters of finance and trade. Gradually, however, their empire enlarged, even in defiance of their own policy, which was directed to plans for confining it within more circumscribed limits; and with its enlargement, the decrease of external danger led them to think of consolidating it into a more permanent form than had at first been contemplated. Various plans therefore began to occupy the minds of Indian politicians, for the settlement and improvement of the country. At first it was not dreamed of that one of these should be the education of the people. On the contrary, it was the invariable creed of the great body of the Company's servants, both civil and military, that to educate the people, or to Christianize them, would be the certain destruction of the British power in the East. Hence the Missionary work which proposed to accomplish both, met with the most virulent opposition, and would

have been put down at once, had it not been for the determined spirit of British Christians, who refused to yield so far to the avarice and rapacious spirit of a mercantile monopoly, as to coolly abandon to endless ignorance and heathenism, the hundred millions of India, merely that a few individuals might fatten on their spoils.

Gradually, however, the idea of educating the people began to take hold of the minds of men in power; but there was little agreement about the kind of education to be given. A number of men, whose attention had been given much to Oriental literature, were great advocates for promoting the higher branches of education in Persic, Arabic, and Sanscrit. This party had long the greatest influence; but at the same time a little was done to promote a more popular and limited education, more adapted to the common people, and accordingly a number of vernacular day-schools were established, principally in the Hoogly district near Calcutta. From the many profitable situations which a knowledge of English opened to the natives in Calcutta, a considerable desire for English education began to be manifested. The Hindu college, partly supported by government, for the education of young Hindoos in English science and literature, was formed; and also a good many humbler seminaries gradually sprung up in Calcutta, in which English, &c. were taught. This formed the commencement of what in this country is usually called the Anglo-mania, led on generally by a number of men, who know little of

the country or the people, and who laid it down as a principle, that it was impossible to give a really good education in the native languages.

Unfortunately for the cause of sound national education, this party soon obtained much influence with government, and succeeded in abolishing the vernacular schools, and also in curtailing the efforts for advancing Sanscrit, Arabic, and Persic literature. Farther than assisting the preservation of the latter species of literature among Europeans, for the purpose of elucidating Indian history, and fully enabling us to understand both the ancient and modern genius of the people and their languages, there was little use for government patronage, as the Bramins of their own accord sufficiently preserve the Sanscrit; and the Musselmans, from having their most revered sacred books in Arabic and Persic, are sufficiently zealous in the study of these.

But the rage for English education has done a serious injury to the country, by suppressing vernacular schools and preventing the improvement of national popular literature, through which the knowledge of Europe might be imparted to larger bodies of the people. The principal argument in favor of giving all the government patronage to English schools, is, that there is nothing in the native languages worth reading, and that books do not exist from which a solid education can be given. This is certainly to a great extent true. The vernacular literature is very limited, and inferior; but this would easily have been remedied.

Had the sum necessary for supporting one of the government schools been laid out in the preparation of good elementary works on history, geography, astronomy, chemistry, &c. &c. long ere now there might have been a library of useful knowledge in the vernaculars, much superior in the amount of information contained in it, to the cause of learning obtained at the Hindoo college of Calcutta, or at any of the English schools. It is very true that there are many advantages, gained by a knowledge of English; but in most instances the pupils never avail themselves, or can avail themselves of these: on the contrary they lose all the native advantages of being good scholars in their own tongue, and never get so much of any other as greatly to add to their information. To educate a native youth entirely in English, almost always makes him a mere pedant. He rarely ever goes beyond the school books from which he is taught. He conceives that all knowledge is contained in these, though some of them are but meagre compilations. He has got them pretty well at his fingers' ends, and when he has done so, he talks of Descartes, Hume, Dugald Stewart, &c. and fancies himself as great a man as any of them. The men who teach him are often possessed of little more, than the outline of knowledge, which the time and capacity of their pupil enable him to acquire. They live and move and have their being among the mere elements of science and literature, and are apt to imagine that these elements are the sum total of the truths



known by the human mind. I do not mean to say that this is the character of the Government teachers in general; but I believe it is the character of the majority. There are among them some men of good talent, and very respectable acquirement, as well as considerable knowledge of the art of teaching; but these often complain that they can find no sphere for their talents, and that the time and capacity of their scholars, confine them necessarily to mere elements, rarely reaching further than the power of reading and very imperfectly speaking a little English, with a smattering of history, geography, arithmetic, and sometimes a little of the mathematics. These slender attainments, be it observed, are at the expense of never learning their own tongue, so as to speak or write in any, but a low vulgar jargon. In fact, if the time spent in learning English were all pure gain to Indian pupils, there would be great advantages attending the system; but much of the time passed in learning English, is clear loss to their general improving in positive and substantial knowledge, as years are spent in learning English words, which might have been much more profitably employed in imbibing ideas through their own language, the correct, elegant, and grammatical knowledge of which they might have learned, along with the ideas communicated to them, both by their teachers, and the books used in the schools.

I hope I shall not be misunderstood as disapproving of English education. Very far from

it. I am anxious to see English education extended much further than it is, among the classes to whom it is likely to be really useful. Latin and Greek are highly useful to Europeans; and no man can be considered a scholar who is not pretty well acquainted with them, but they are of little use to the common and unprofessional people of England or Scotland, unless combined with a good education in their own tongue. What would people think of taking the sons of the ordinary workmen of England, who are destined to earn their bread by common industry, and teaching them to read and write in Latin or French, but never teaching them how to write or speak a sentence of grammatical English? But such is the government scheme of English education for India. The great mass of the boys are mere common street boys, whose fathers are shopkeepers, &c., and wish them to learn to write, and keep English accounts, in order to be able to get a livelihood by acting as clerks or copyists in the service of the English. The idea of studying English for the purpose of improving their minds, and enlarging the sphere of their knowledge, never enters their heads, though in the English reports, &c., it occupies a prominent part. It is not denied that here and there in the mind of a youth, especially in Calcutta, the genuine love of knowledge may be excited; but the general character of the pupils, in Calcutta, and more particularly in the provinces, is that of common lads, who are learning a trade, and that trade is merely

to write English, and keep accounts, as assistants to Europeans who are not able to understand the native language.

The purpose of Government in first adopting the English plan of education, was no doubt principally to improve and elevate the higher orders, but though a little desire of learning English has been excited among them, they do not in general attend the schools. In Benares, though the number of high, noble, and wealthy families is greater than in any other city in India, the scholars of the government seminary, though it is exceedingly well conducted, are, with few exceptions, Bengalis, who are mere sojourners, and of others who want only to obtain a little smattering of what will fit them to earn a livelihood. The higher orders do not like to send their children to those schools where they have to associate with all classes, however low; but when they wish to teach them English they will rather engage a private tutor. Had the government, merely as far as English is concerned, used their influence to get the rich and aristocratical families to teach their children, and obtained suitable tutors for them, the men of leisure and means might have been well instructed, and drawn away from licentious indulgences, by the attraction of intellectual enjoyments; but to expect to enlighten and improve without conversion, to any purer creed, a number of poor lads, whose whole time, after learning to read, write, and keep accounts, must be passed in hard labor for daily bread, without a book to look into,

is not very likely to lead to the improvement of a great nation.

As I formerly remarked when speaking of Christian teachers taught through the medium of English, these youths have not any proper knowledge of their own tongue, and are quite incapable of infusing the few ideas they have learned in English, with any sort of propriety, into their native language. In English, their attainments are often such, that though the amount of their solid knowledge is exceedingly small, one is rather pleased with the readiness with which they can speak on the few subjects taught in their class books; but a person well skilled in the native language, is surprized to hear a student of the Hindoo college, or any other government seminary, quite incapable of pronouncing it properly, or speaking a single sentence in it grammatically. The boys taught in the provincial schools of the Company are scarcely yet deserving of notice. With the exception of one or two young men from the Delhi college, they are only fit for the humble office of copiests. To talk of their enlightening India with the science and literature of Europe, is absolutely absurd. Who ever heard of a few merchants' clerks, and copiests in public offices, altering the destinies of a mighty empire? What is the influence that may be expected to move a hundred millions of people? Is it likely to be that of a few poor boys, who, if they spread themselves over the country at all, are only a set of hirelings, of the lowest order in the eyes of their countrymen, who may

find them useful as servants, because they can assist in the transaction of the little business they have with the English; but who would no more think of looking up to them as instructors, than they would think of abandoning their country, the most unnatural to them of all thoughts, and migrating to Europe, the land of the unclean.

The neglect of the vernacular, and the entire substitution of English in the government schools, may be in part ascribed to the paucity of teachers properly acquainted with the native languages. A considerable number of the teachers are nearly in the state of the Vicar of Wakefield's son, who went to Holland to teach Dutchmen English, without himself being able to speak Dutch. Here the absurdity is a little lessened, by their having some native under-teachers, to bring the pupils on so far, that they know something of the meaning of the instructor's own language, before they come to be taught directly by the English teacher, who only superintends the junior, and partly teaches the senior classes. One great benefit is lost by this plan, which ought in fact to be the principal object in teaching English at all—the raising up of good writers and translators, to transfuse European knowledge into the native languages. Scarcely any of the teachers can teach them how to translate, an art of which the natives even of the best education, have no idea.

I have never yet seen a book translated by a native from English, Persian, Arabic, or Sanscrit, though many thousands of them are acquainted

with one or other of these, that was at all readable, unless done with the assistance of some European. From this the practical works may be excepted, but they are not in general translations, but imitations of the original, or at most, paraphrases. A few individuals taught by the Missionaries are now able to translate tolerably from Persian into Urdu, or from the latter into Hinduee; but none of them are fit to be left alone in the work. Even the Urdu translation of the Koran was made under European superintendence !

The present system of English education frequently makes them able to read and speak English pretty well; but as they get little or no collateral vernacular education, their acquirements are of little or no use, except to fit them for being servants to Europeans, or under-functionaries, such as clerks in government offices. These of course, to a native, are no small benefits; but of how much more value would they be, if they were not only put in possession of the key to European knowledge, but taught how to bring it forth from its recesses, and present it in more accessible forms to their countrymen—the twenty thousandth part of whom never can, nor will learn English. Had there been an extensive system of vernacular education established, the present English seminaries might have been of immense use, as the most promising youths whose great progress in their own language, marked them out as likely to be useful men, when well educated, might have been

selected and taught English science and literature, at the same time that they were made good writers and speakers, and accomplished scholars in their own language. There are in some of the schools, vernacular classes, and a little education is given in Hindustani, or rather, sometimes only in Persic, which being also a foreign tongue, aggravates the evil. How singularly would it sound in England, were a student to be interrogated thus, and to give answers as below: ‘Do you know Latin?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Do you know French?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Do you know English?’ ‘No.—I can only speak it; but I know nothing of the grammar. I cannot read it; and though it is written in the same character as the Latin, I do not know how an English word should be spelled, nor how the educated classes pronounce or arrange their sentences.’ Strange as such a dialogue would sound in English ears, on English ground, it correctly describes the state of most of the students in the Government schools in India—only substitute Latin for English; for French, Persic; and for English, their own mother tongue, Hindustani; or in Bengal, Bengali. What use, it may be asked, is such an education—which, unless in a few instances, does little more than produce a few pedants, whose whole characters are dissevered from those of their countrymen, to whom they are incapable, if they were willing, of imparting the smattering of knowledge they have learned? In its present stage, the system is worth little, except as a blind to cover the general indifference to the education of the

people, and make the public believe a great deal is being done to raise them in the scale of civilization and morality. 'Though some of the highest functionaries of government are most zealous for the improvement of the people, by means of education, it is difficult to believe that such is the case, as it respects the body. We cannot forget, that till a few years ago, the hostility on the part of the government was most marked; and though things are very different now, yet every step forward has been taken with manifest reluctance. A l  kh of Rupees, (about £10,000,) a mere mite compared with the wants of the country, when at last granted, has been applied so as to produce as little general education as possible. A friend of mine, calculated the other day, that at a neighbouring government school, each pupil on an average cost 10 rupees (£1) a month, where he gets nothing but tuition, while those of a school for orphans, belonging to the Church Missionary Society, where the education is equally good, cost only 2 rupees a month each, though not only educated, but fed and clothed. But some one may say, "The one school requires to be on a splendid style to suit the higher orders." That may be intended, but very few of such orders would frequent it. It is, after all, attended by the working classes—principally Bengalis, who hope to earn a livelihood by being clerks or copyists, on salaries not much exceeding the monthly expence of their education.

To lavish the funds of the State on a few day-schools, giving but a miserable education, and then



dignify them with the name of colleges, &c., to the utter neglect of vernacular or national education, seems any thing except an indication of great zeal on the part of government, for improving the people.

In the time of Lord W. Bentinck, Mr. W. Adam was appointed commissioner, to examine into the state of education in Bengal and Bahar. This gentleman possessed in the very highest degree, every qualification for the work. He travelled, and in person investigated the state, number, and working, of all sorts of schools in several provinces, and laid before government most lucid reports; from which it appeared, that the whole country was in the most wretched state, as it respected education. The existing schools were of the most miserable description: funds left for their support, grossly misapplied; and in fact, with a considerable machinery for education, nothing worthy of the name existed. A few months ago he presented to the present government his last report; from which it would be easy to construct a complete apparatus for national education; and in the hands of such an able agent, there would have been no fear of failure. But instead of availing themselves of the knowledge brought to light by Mr. Adam, adopting his suggestions, or employing him to mature a plan; after all the expense of the commission, they laid his reports on the shelf, and gave him some petty office, instead of the great work of carrying out his philanthropic views. A few weeks ago he left the country for America,

finding it impossible to do any thing more for the cause. Can such men have any real wish to improve by education, the people of India? I should not like positively to say they have not, but their deeds are not such as to give evidence of much zeal. There is, however, a disposition growing up in high quarters, from which much good may be expected; and symptoms of a return to the more natural mode of educating the people in their own language, as well as in that of their rulers, are beginning to appear. It is to be hoped, that the utmost encouragement will be given to all who are able to learn English, so that many of the ablest scholars may enrich their minds with its stores, and then reproduce them in the language of the millions whose only mode of education must be in their own tongue. At the same time more is wanted. All the puerilities of superstition must be put to flight by the spread of pure knowledge in a popular form; and to enable the people to profit even by a vernacular literature, instead of confining its attention to a few English schools, it is most desirable that some plan should be formed by government for extending over the whole country a cheap vernacular education, adapted to the wants of the ordinary people, and calculated to raise them in the scale of civilization, and to bestow on them those comforts of life which can never be obtained or enjoyed by those who are in a state of debasing ignorance. The English seminaries, none of which could be dispensed with, would be far more useful were they combined with some ex-

tended plan of this kind; and if they were made the centres of school operations in their respective districts, and so connected with the study of the native languages, and the general instruction of the country, they might become channels through which the healthy streams of European knowledge might be directed, to spread fertility over the hitherto barren fields of native literature; whereas they have hitherto been more like standing pools, in which, no doubt, some wholesome water might be found, but from which no streams issued to refresh the parched lands around.

From the schools intended for natives, and supported by government, Christianity is excluded on the principle, that the ruling power, considers itself pledged not to interfere with the religious opinions of the natives. A line of policy of this nature, is obviously the proper course for the British rulers of India to pursue, since enlisting the powers of government on the side of Christianity, would excite all the virulence of religious prejudice, and the interested opposition of large classes of Bramins and others, and thus endanger the permanency of British rule, and deprive us for a lengthened period of all opportunity of directing the gradual development of Indian civilization, and propagating the Gospel of Christ among the millions who are now subjects of the British Crown. No Christian man who wishes to see India turned to God, whatever may be his ideas either of the wisdom or benevolence of many of its measures, can for a moment wish to do or say any thing calcu-

lated to hurt the government of Britain over India; it being evident that there is at present no other power that could or would lay its wide dominions entirely open to the progress of truth, and genuine civilization. If Britain succeeds in laying in India the foundation of a new social system, civil institutions, true civilization, and pure Christianity, it will be the noblest monument to her fame that could ever be raised. No nation ever enjoyed such a field for the display of the highest qualities that can make a people truly great and noble, as Britain has in India; and hence it is the duty of every man to do all he can to render British influence as effective, and as pure as it is possible for human influence to be. It is, therefore, important that we should endeavour to the utmost to make every public plan for the good of India, as perfect as we can, making all just allowances for the peculiar difficulties of the position in which the government is placed. Some good men have found great fault with the government system of schools, on account of the exclusion from it of religion, and the non-introduction of the Sacred Scriptures as a class-book. Were the heathen population but a small part of the community, things might be different; but where the governors and those who profess their religion, are but a handful, it does seem to me, that the wisest course is for them to grant, not only complete toleration, but, as far as religion is concerned, to abstain from all state interference; and as far as the state engages in education, to confine itself to what is strictly

secular, but combined with pure morality. While, therefore, I have no objection to the government education being purely secular, as long as every man who believes is allowed perfect toleration and protection, both in the profession and propagation of his faith, by the legitimate means of argument, &c., and no obstructions are laid in the way of bodies purely religious, to hinder them from extending what they believe to be the word of God; it is obviously just, that whatever instruction the government itself gives, ought to be of a nature entirely neutral. Here then comes the grand difficulty in the way of a government plan of education for India. If native literature and native science are to be the only subjects taught, the government not only takes up and teaches an absurd literature and false science, calculated to do no good to their subjects; but from the whole being so inseparably mixed with Hindoo and Musselman theological superstitions, the government becomes at once the principal support and propagator of religious absurdities and pernicious demoralizing superstition, and of course exposed to the charge from Christians of every class, of making the funds of the state, the means of deceiving and ruining the souls of the people, and preventing the progress of Christianity. If, on the other hand, European science and literature are adopted, these cannot by any possibility be taught, without undermining to a very large extent, both Hinduism and Mohammedanism; as both these systems are much mixed up with false systems of science, both phy-

sical and moral. Not only so, but it is impossible to teach European literature and science—the produce of Christian minds, and drawing all their vital principles from the genius of Christianity, without teaching to a much larger extent than at first may be imagined, nearly all the peculiar fundamental doctrines and moral precepts of the Bible. The works of our poets, our historians, and philosophers, except those of the sceptical school, are full of Christianity; so that unless the sceptical or anti-christian—or rather anti-religious—system is made the basis, Christianity cannot be kept out of the schools where heathen youths are taught European knowledge. Even the sceptical system, if adopted, is not suitable, for it is both anti-hindoo and anti-christian in a positive sense; so that on none of these principles can an education purely neutral be given.

These difficulties account in some measure for the great inconsistencies in the government plans of education. Sanscrit colleges have been, and are supported at Calcutta and Benares by the state, in which Pundits are paid to teach the false science, and absurd theological and mythological fables of Hinduism as solemn truths—sanctioned, of course, by state patronage; and in other seminaries, Musselman youths are taught at the expense of the state, the puerilities of the Koran, and the nonsensical traditions of their prophet. For the honour of common sense, the government is gradually and prudently withdrawing its support from these colleges; but on turning to the English plan

of which I have already said so much, other inconsistencies meet us.

Christianity and European knowledge are indivisible, but it is proposed to have the one without the other. Hence in attempting to make the division, such loud protestations against introducing Christianity have been made, and such precautions adopted to keep it out, that some of the schools, especially the Hindoo college at Calcutta, have taken up a position almost positively hostile to Christianity, and yet some of their directors have professed to speak of their operations, as tending to the conversion of the natives to Christianity. Books of various kinds on natural history, &c. offered by the Tract Society for the use of the libraries have been rejected, so that not only is religion not to be taught in the classes, but it must be kept as far as possible from the pupils in their leisure hours. The inconsistency of this will appear, if it is considered, that it is absolutely impossible to form a library of English history or belle lettres of any extent to be really valuable, without having in it the works of many of the most pious Christians, full of doctrines, and maxims of life, as much Christian, and as much calculated to convert to the faith of Christ, as any of the treatises published by the Tract Society. Where a line may be found on which a consistent plan can be formed for teaching European knowledge on neutral principles, it seems difficult to say; and perhaps the best plan would be, for the government not to be very particular in profes-

sions of any kind, but to allow books containing European knowledge of all kinds, religious or profane, to have a free circulation in their schools; and while class books actually ordered to be read, may be strictly of a secular nature, the teachers should not be tied down by any rules, but allowed to teach or explain any subject, not excluding the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, wherever there are those who are willing to study them. As these schools are not churches, and could not receive a pupil as a Christian, even should the tendency of the teaching, or any books to be found in the library lead him to wish to become so, it is obvious that after all he must have recourse to a minister of the Gospel, before he can be baptized; and if any odium arise, it must always fall, not on the government school, but on the Missionary who baptized him, and who has no connexion with government, or with the school.

Yours, &c.

W. B.

P.S. In corroboration of what I have said about the inefficiency of the youths educated exclusively in English, even when really well educated, I may give the following quotation from a letter received by me since I wrote the above, from a gentleman occupying a high office under government.

“ I know one youth by name, Kadhnath, assistant to the Surveyor General. He is a first rate mathematician, and algebraist; indeed there are not above two or three better men among our own



scientific gentlemen, so Major —— told me. He was educated in the Hindoo college in Calcutta, and cannot write even Bengali. He is as useless as we ourselves are for the work of dissemination, though now most anxious to enlighten his countrymen. He is now all anxiety to master the Sanscrit and Viddhants."

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## LETTER XIV.

### INDIAN CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT.

DEAR FRIEND,

In treating of the state and progress of the Missionary work in India, a complete view of the subject requires me to notice the state of the Established church and its bearing on the cause of Missions. It was no doubt the purpose of the founders of the Indian portion of the English church, that it should be essentially a *Missionary church*; such at least, were the views of those excellent men, — Grant, Brown, Buchanan, and others, by whose exertions the legislature was induced to give to the chaplaincy of the East India Company, much of the form and consistency of an establishment. Those pious and zealous individuals, hoped that the chaplains of the Company would act in the capacity of Missionaries to the heathen, as well as ministers to the Europeans, the fewness of whom at most stations would leave

them with comparatively light duties to perform, while the heathen around them presented a boundless field for evangelical labors. A large body of men, in addition to those expressly sent by Missionary Societies, would have thus been employed in making known the Gospel to the natives; and there was reason to hope that long ere now the effects of their labors would have been great. This result of the establishment in India has not been realized. The chaplains, with few exceptions, have never done any thing as Missionaries. Most of them have not attempted to learn the language, except the little required for domestic purposes; and what is still more to be lamented, some have shown themselves hostile to the Missionary work altogether. That such should be the case after so long a period, in which Missionary exertions have been carried on in this country, with the utmost zeal by the church of England, is matter of much surprize, as well as of regret. The individuals, however, who compose this class are very few in number; and, from their general insignificance, have but little influence. The heads of the church, and the most influential of the chaplains are invariably friends to the Missionary cause.

You are aware that the ecclesiastical establishment of Northern India, consists of a Bishop, an Archdeacon, and a number of chaplains. The number of the latter is from thirty-six to forty, some of whom are always absent on account of health, or other causes; so that the number

in the actual discharge of duty, has rarely exceeded thirty-four or thirty five. In point of talent, learning, and general efficiency, the clergy of the Indian church, I should think, are considerably inferior to the average of the clergy of the church of England at home. This might naturally be expected from the mode of their appointment by the Court of Directors, with whom interest, not ministerial qualifications, form the standard. As to talent for ministerial labor, the great body of the company's chaplains are below the mediocrity of any body in England, with which I am acquainted, taking an equal number at random. I do not mean absolutely to assert this, as it is very difficult to form a correct judgment of bodies of men, especially when scattered; but one thing at least may be remarked, that there are several of the company's chaplains so utterly unfit by nature, that they never would be allowed to officiate at all in any Dissenting body; and even at home, in the church of England, it is doubtful if a Bishop would allow them to have the actual cure of souls. One whom we have known was an imbecile in intellect, notoriously destitute of judgment. His sermons were not only miserable and ignorant productions, but had not even the quality of common sense. Another who was at the same time at a neighbouring station, either could not or would not preach, unless occasionally; but after reading the prayers, used to leave the church, on which some layman read a sermon to the congregation. The following extract from a letter

written to me by a Gentleman, after a visit to a neighbouring station, will give an idea of the ease with which some of the clergy in this country get through their labors:—"Last Sunday I went to church twice, and in the morning we had an excellent sermon. It was well attended, but in the evening, will you believe it? although there were three ministers at the station, one of whom was sitting in the church at the time: the prayers were read by the Judge, and the sermon by the assistant collector!"

As an evidence of the general want of talent among the chaplains in this country, may be noticed the fact that they are not able to keep up any creditable periodical work as an organ of their body, though in general they are very sensitive on all subjects connected with church affairs. The Calcutta Christian Intelligencer, a monthly magazine conducted on evangelical principles by an excellent and pious clergyman, is left, as far as the clergy are concerned, almost entirely without support. Unless occasionally, it has no original articles of any value, and in consequence, its circulation is very limited. As an organ of the church of England it exhibits a degree of imbecility in her clergy which it is difficult to believe actually exists. The number of sound evangelical preachers among the chaplains, is small; and these are, most of them, men of mediocrity powers, and some of them, as preachers, much below mediocrity. Some of them are men of most sincere piety, but so destitute of preaching talents that there is nothing about them to attract

the people to their ministrations. The consequence is, that at many of the stations, the great body of the people do not attend the church, unless where there are military, who are marched to it by general orders. Where there are evening services, the attendance is voluntary, and then it is frequently the case that, with the exception of ten or twenty individuals who consider it a duty to countenance the worship, scarcely any attend. There are of course exceptions to the above description. There are some of the clergy of the churches in India, who are not only pious and excellent men, but really efficient ministers of Christ. At the head of these are to be ranked the present Bishop, Dr. Wilson, and Archdeacon Dealtry.

The former was well known to the religious public in London, as Vicar of Islington; and were his clergy in general possessed of his piety, scriptural knowledge, and excellent preaching talents, how different would be the state and influence of the Indian church. Dr. Wilson, however, though he has done great good in India by his preaching, which is far superior to any thing common in the churches of India, yet does not seem to have been either very wise or very successful as a Bishop. His policy has given satisfaction to no party. A continual and imprudent intermeddling with things scarcely within his province, an undisguised attempt to extend in every way the power and prerogatives of his office, and that sometimes in affairs too trifling and secular to be

creditable to him, and a harsh and assuming carriage towards his clergy, especially Missionaries, seem to have made him more or less obnoxious to all classes, whether clergy or laymen. Many, however, have attributed much of what is censurable in these respects, to the influence of persons around him, to whom he shewed a deference to which they were not entitled. He is himself a very zealous supporter of the Missionary work; and his *later* visits to the different Missionary stations have, as far as I can learn, been conducted in a truly evangelical spirit, and seem to have done much to encourage and strengthen the hands of the Missionaries. As I am not minutely acquainted with the transactions which he had with the Southern Missions of the Church, and which led to such violent explosions of feeling previously to the excellent Corrie's becoming Bishop of Madras, I shall not take upon me to judge, respecting the merits or demerits of the Bishop's measures. At all events, they rendered him very unpopular; and it must be allowed, that he seems for a time to have been under the influence of very excited feelings, on Missionary subjects, and rashly to have made assertions respecting the general character of Missionaries, utterly at variance with fact and Christian candor. Whether or not he had met with a few bad specimens among the laborers of the Propagation Society in the South, almost the only body with which at that time he was personally acquainted, I do not presume to know; but most certainly he had no

ground to impeach the conduct and motives of all sects and parties. When called upon, he explained away part of what he had said; but, though challenged to the proof of his charges, nothing like an *amende honorable*, nor an attempt to substantiate his statements could be obtained. He seemed to think, that being a Bishop, possessing power to reprove and exhort his clergy publicly, conferred on him the right of libelling others without any one having a corresponding right to call him to account. The Calcutta Missionaries thought otherwise; and the collision produced by his unaccountable course, occasioned much alienation of feeling. Indeed, the Missionary body in general considered itself much aggrieved; and perhaps the effects have not even yet entirely disappeared. One great error of Bishop Wilson's course, has been his exclusive Church of Englandism, and want of catholicity. No one had any right to complain of a consistent preference of his own church; but there is something very unnatural in an evangelical bishop in this country, so utterly blind, as not to see any Christian community but the Episcopal Church. In a country where the operations of Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists, for the conversion of the heathen, are far more extensive than those of the Church, and conducted by men equal to the agents of the Church, in talent, learning, and energy of character, to profess to see nobody in the field, and to acknowledge nothing that is done by them, is a piece of miserable policy, so far as the interests

of the Church itself are concerned, but more seriously pernicious in its effects on the Christian feeling and unity of the general body of Christians in India. A Bishop of Calcutta, were he a man of enlarged catholic mind and enlightened piety, might naturally be the head, not only of his own Church, but of the whole system of operations for the evangelization of the country. His elevated position, his general influence, and the extent of his connexions, would highly qualify him for aiding and stimulating all good men. His advice would be valued by all. Sectarianism, which ought to have no place in such a country, would be kept down, and a general harmony among different parties, would prevail. It has been the misfortune of India, that she never yet has had any but Sectarian Bishops. Not one of them has ever extended his Christian sympathies, unless in a very limited degree, beyond the narrow precincts of his own sect, nor ever appreciated the piety and zealous exertions of those whose conscientious opinions differed from his own. It might have been hoped that Dr. Wilson would have been above such Sectarian narrowness; and as all Dissenters highly respected him, and rejoiced most cordially in his appointment, if he had taken such an elevated position, he would have made his Church the leader in every good and generous effort, instead of transfusing into her a narrow sensitiveness and insulting jealousy of those who certainly differ from her in externals, but who have the most cordial love for all good men in her communion. It is matter



of deep regret, that Dr. Wilson, with all his excellencies, has in one way or another greatly increased the spirit of Sectarianism in India. Churchmen have been taught to regard Dissenters as radicals and bugbears; and Dissenters, thrown on the defensive, have been rendered jealous of their Church-neighbours. There was no necessity for this, since the field of usefulness is so wide as not to require any undue contact; but when once such a state of things arises, there will be imprudent men on both sides who will aggravate the evil by intemperate conduct. Some of the chaplains have greatly promoted this state of things, at several of the stations in the interior. Some of them have of late become quite enamoured of the semi-popery of the Oxford tracts; and, though formerly members of Bible and other committees, have refused to sit on such, because there were dissenters on them. At stations where there was no attempt made to form any dissenting church, some of them have delivered violent harangues about tithes, church-rates, and the danger of dissent—things unknown in India. Even mixed institutions, where the majority were churchmen, are treated by some of them as anti-church associations. Millenarianism having got a little ground among some of the more pious, has also produced its usual fruits of censoriousness, spiritual pride, and apathy to Missionary exertion. Of these evils, the Missionaries of the Church Society are, in general, quite free. They are a body of pious, zealous, and laborious men; and

though, for the most part, consistent and conscientious adherents of their own Church, are possessed of a truly Christian and catholic spirit. Their position, however, is by no means enviable. Though fully ordained clergymen of the Church, and, in general, more talented and better educated men than the chaplains, they are seldom treated by the latter as at all their equals. In fact, they are sometimes studiously insulted, in order to prevent their imagining themselves to be upon a par with them. 'Those' of them who are Englishmen, are treated with a little more respect; but the Germans, who are the majority, are sometimes treated with such a want of consideration, that were they not possessed of much forbearance, it would surprize any one that they should continue in the Church. The cause of this distinction seems to be, that, as the Germans have not from infancy, been so thoroughly imbued with the peculiar views of the English Church, they are suspected of not being sufficiently zealous in its cause. I should think, however, that though naturally not extreme churchmen, they are sufficiently episcopalian for all practical purposes; and that this system of petty annoyance is any thing but useful to the Church. The Church Society itself puts its Missionaries on such a footing, that they appear too much like a body of mercenaries, not trusted to their own guidance: and this, no doubt, tends much to their being treated by the other clergy, as if they were curates of an inferior order; whereas the inferiority consists in nothing but salary.

Having noticed these various features of the Indian Church, we shall be better able to estimate its general influence on the Missionary work. That it has failed to be so useful as its founders anticipated, is certain. They designed it to be Missionary: but it has not become so. It has indeed produced a few, whose labors for the good of the heathen have been models of devotion. Martyn, Corrie, Thomason, and some others, have been bright ornaments: but the names of these few are not sufficient to redeem the Church from the charge of general barrenness. It would be wrong to say, that the chaplains do nothing for the heathen—they do something, but it is very insignificant, compared with their means. It is perfectly astonishing, how little of a Missionary spirit is to be found in the congregations in which they labor. In the midst of millions of heathen, most of them sit down and pursue their routine, with as little reference to them as if there were no such beings in the world, except a few, perhaps, in some far “distant isle of the ocean.”

That a church so situated, with a dearth both of piety and talent, jealous and sensitive about its political claims, divided into parties holding various shades of sentiments, and struggling for the pre-eminence, should do much good, is not to be expected. The smallness of the aid received by the Church Society through the chaplains, is a proof how little they care in general about the cause among the heathen. Dissenters are very few in number among the laymen in India.

Almost the whole English population may be considered as churchmen; and yet the amount of direct Missionary work carried on by the church, with funds raised in India, is very small. The few Evangelical chaplains have certainly been blessed with considerable success among the Europeans. The number of really pious laymen in the civil and military services of the Company, is, all things taken into account, not inconsiderable, and not a few of them are men whose religion is of the purest and most unostentatious kind—the sincerity of which is evinced by their genuine philanthropy. Some of them are men of much more enlarged and enlightened minds than the average of their pastors; and their zeal and liberality are highly creditable to their principles. Indeed, the liberality of not a few of the English gentlemen in this country, when compared with their income, would surprize most people in England. I know of some whose expenditure on religious and benevolent objects, is much more than they spend on themselves. Instead of giving only a tithe, there are some who give even more than a half, but in such a way that few know the extent of their benevolence. Still, however, it must be confessed, that, though there are a good many genuine Christians among the Europeans, the proportion is very small. At some, yea at many of the stations, where there are clergymen, there is not even a family which makes a profession of religion. A vast majority are notoriously altogether opposed to serious piety, and but too

many of the clergy make little or no attempts to reclaim them. Nor are some of those who do, very likely to succeed in such a state of society. Of the pious men in India, however, only a portion are the fruits of the labors of the chaplains. Not a few have received their religious impressions in Europe, and many more, perhaps, the majority, from private intercourse, and the labors of the Missionaries. In the scattered state of Anglo-Indian society, the influence of private intercourse among friends, is proportionably greater than that of the pulpit, than it is in Europe, where public religious exercises are often much more efficient and influential from the sympathy of large congregations, than can be assembled in India.

With respect to the general bearing of the English Establishment of chaplains in India, my opinion is, that it has greatly fallen below the expectations of its founders; that, its composition being radically defective, it is never likely to do much good among the natives; and, that, even among the European population, it is, on the whole inefficient, and keeps up a continual sectarian irritation which would not exist, if the country were left to the voluntary efforts of its residents, aided by Missionary Societies, &c. Of what use then, it may be asked, is the present Ecclesiastical Establishment in India? This is a question, which I confess myself unable to answer. To me it seems doubtful whether or not the spiritual wants of the country would not all along have been better supplied by the Propagation, Church,

London, Baptist, American, and other Societies, than has been done by state interference. It may be said that thirty, or even more preachers have been afforded to Northern India by means of the government plan ; but what are those preachers ? There never was one half of them, as the natives say, worth their salt ; and there is reason to believe that the liberality of the residents could have supported even a greater number of really efficient men, had they been left to their own voluntary efforts. They would then, in some measure, also have had the men of their choice ; and it would have been truly a wonder, if they should not have found twenty, who would have been worth much more to the country, than thirty of those appointed by the Leadenhall Street Directors.

Were the government to content itself with appointing a chaplain to each regiment of English troops, who should go with them to the field, and leave the settlements to provide for themselves, with the assistance of the Missionary and other Societies, there can be no doubt, that quite as much good would be done. Most of the principal stations have regiments of English troops, and would therefore still have chaplains, and the troops would not be left as now, completely destitute, when marching, or in the field. In some instances at present, the chaplains are worse than useless, as they stand between the people, and a much more efficient ministry. I have seen a station where there were six European Missionaries, any one of whom could, without much addition to his labor,

have done all the English work gratis, which the chaplain did for a salary nearly equal to that of three Missionaries ; and, in this instance, the chaplain was a poor weak creature whom scarcely any one went to hear. Yet as long as he occupied the place, the Church Missionaries could not preach ; and had the dissenters attempted to form a congregation, they would have met with the most determined opposition as intruders, and, in all probability, would have had very few to listen to them. Though I never wish to see Missionaries diverted from native work, yet it is obvious, that where there is a large Mission, supplying an occasional sermon to a few dozen of English neighbours, would scarcely ever be felt as an addition to their labor ; on the contrary, it would be an agreeable exercise. Were the chaplains generally efficient men, there would be no occasion for wishing that the field should be left more open ; but in India, where there are few who go to church from principle, and where most care nothing about whether the clergymen be capable or incapable, it is a great pity to see a mere cipher occupying the only position for doing good to the people, while others are on the spot, much better qualified for the work, but completely shut out from all opportunity of preaching to their neglected brethren and countrymen. The chaplain also, from being so completely separated from the Missionary, and assuming a worldly superiority, is a clog on the wheels of the Missionary cause. His sympathies are not, in general, cordially with

that cause; and he comes in between it and the Christian public, so as often seriously to hurt, instead of promoting it. With regard to the Missionary of his own church, he puts on the air of a superior, and, in fact, is often commissioned most preposterously to act as such; and any contact with the dissenting Missionary he is, in most cases, anxious to avoid.

To sum up the whole, I do not think that the spirit of the Indian Church Establishment harmonizes with the spirit of Missions; and that its general influence is unfavorable, though there are some of its ministers whose individual influence is highly beneficial. I do not think this the place for saying any thing about the objections that might be urged against the fundamental principle of a Christian Church, supported by compulsory taxation levied from the heathen; but I conceive nothing could be more desirable, than that she should be entirely remodelled so as to be made merely a military chaplaincy, or an essentially Missionary body, harmonizing at least with the institutions formed by the church at home, for evangelizing the heathen.

Yours, &c.

W. B.



## LETTER XV.

CONNEXION OF GOVERNMENT WITH NATIVE  
SUPERSTITIONS.

DEAR FRIEND,

In no country has the word 'toleration' been well understood, and it would be too much to look to India for a better state of things in this respect, than is to be found in more enlightened countries. The declared policy of the British Government of India, has all along been that of non-interference in religious affairs. All sects are to be protected in the exercise of their religious ceremonies: but no attempt is to be made on the part of government to change the religion or usages of the people. That such a course of policy was the wisest, all things considered, few will dispute; for even those who would regard it as a part of the duty of civil rulers to teach their subjects the true faith, will admit, that the Indian Government could never have been established at all, or certainly, if established, could not long have existed, had it proclaimed itself determined to alter the religion and customs of its Hindoo and Musselman subjects.

Toleration and protection to all, therefore became, and still is the wisest policy: but toleration is a word of many meanings; and, in India, seems usually to have been understood to mean the support, and encouragement of the religion of the great

body of the natives, and its protection, as far as it can be reasonably exerted, against the inroads of Christianity. In order to carry out their idea of toleration, the principal temples at various great places of resort, were taken under the paternal care of the functionaries of government; the worshippers were taxed to support the system; and, to give to the Bramins of these places the weight and respectability of clergy supported by government, the whole management of their financial matters was made over to European officials, by whom the affairs of the temples are managed. Missionaries are employed by the Bramins under these English officers to preach over the country the virtues of their respective shrines, in order to draw together pilgrims, by taxing whom, the Bramins may be fed, and the government have a surplus to indemnify themselves for their zeal in the cause of the gods. In the north of India, however, this system is not extensively carried on, being only in force at a few places, viz. Juggarnath, Gaya, and Allahabad, where taxes on pilgrims are levied. In most other places, all that the government does, is, merely its proper duty, the establishment of such a police at places of great superstitious resort, as may guard against accidents. This is the case at Benares and elsewhere; and to the interference at these places, for such purposes, though in some instances, perhaps, it has been a little more than necessary, no reasonable man could object; but it does seem strange, that a government, composed of men professing Christianity,

should, for such a paltry revenue, actually become the principal pander to the debasing superstitions of the people.

In the Madras Presidency, things are carried on to such an extent, that, to us in the north of India, accustomed as we are to specimens of the same kind on a smaller scale, it seems perfectly incredible. Here, though a few civilians, (who, by the bye, seem really to do it *con amore*, so that no objection for conscience sake is ever heard,) may occasionally appear, exerting all their official powers to give *eclat* to the absurd worship of a block of wood; yet we never hear of all the military and civil functionaries of a station being called on to give the public honors of the government to such monstrosities. Some men of high honor and Christian principle in the South, have refused to take part in such rites; and, rather than stain their characters, have resigned places of high public trust and emolument. Such men are truly honorable, and will have an abundant reward, if from no other source—from an approving conscience; but how the Madras Government could induce a large body of born and educated English Gentlemen to perform the mean, contemptible, and ridiculous part of puppets in a procession of the belly-god; or the still more absurd one of masters of the ceremonies to such a personage, surpasses all comprehension. If the subject were not one of deep national disgrace, and undoubted sinfulness, one could not but feel amused at the idea of a few gentlemen deeming themselves wise

enough to rule a country, sitting down, with grave faces, to decide, that, unless a block of wood, which the people themselves venerate so little, that they would not give it a pull to move it from the spot, were made to go its annual round of a few hundred yards, by the strength of a number of starving peasants, dragged for the purpose from their fields,—the British empire in India must certainly fall! Assuredly it would have been difficult to get any other half dozen of men, between the vale of Cashmere and Cape Comarin, that, with all their wisdom, would have come to so sage a conclusion. And all this, after the abolition of the Suttee,—an ancient and venerated, though barbarous rite; and after thousands of instances, in which we have innovated on customs, much more valued by the natives, than the presence of government functionaries at childish processions.

We are indeed told that it must be done, since we are pledged to it. It has been asked a thousand times, ‘Where and when these pledges were given.’ As yet no answer has been received: and for a very good reason, that if any persons were ever so foolish as to pledge themselves on the subject, they could not pledge the British nation for ever, to such an absurdity as to maintain, *vi et armis*, all the foolish local superstitions in the country, even after the people themselves cry out against them. Where the strength of local superstition is not sufficient to drag the god of the neighbourhood from the place where he stands all

the year, the government might surely let him quietly remain till the zeal of his votaries return; and if they are so cool on the subject, as to let him rot away in his place, it is not very likely the safety of the empire will be much endangered, by its revival to avenge his cause. Where there are actual endowments formerly made by idolators, or by the ancient governments of India to heathen temples, the government should not seize on them, or apply them to other purposes, till they naturally revert to the state, from the original purpose to which they were applied, being no longer attainable; or that, from change of circumstances, it may prove pernicious to the public. This is a point, however, of great difficulty: but the Indian Government has already decided it in the case of the Hughly Imambāra, which was designed by the founder for the support and encouragement of Mohammedanism. The funds of this Musselman institution were found to be larger than were required; and the government took part of them to establish a college where European science and literature might be taught, though utterly subversive of the religion which the foundation was originally intended to promote. With the legality or illegality of this act, I have nothing to do; but certainly after such an instance, there ought to have been no cant concerning pledges of non-interference with the native religions. Here is a large property transferred at once from Mohammedanism—not certainly to Christianity, but to what is even more opposed to its essential nature—

the support of modern science and literature, in conjunction with which it is well known, Moham-medanism cannot possibly exist; from the fact, that the Korân has given a system of philosophy demonstratably false.

In this case the government has pointed out the wisest and fairest course. The native endowments may be allowed to be applied to their original purposes, till either in whole, or in part, they cease to be required, or to be useful to the people. It need not be strictly inquired whether that usefulness is real or imaginary; but, whether or not it is what the founder designed the foundation to produce. But whenever a surplus revenue over and above the production of all the intended benefits of the foundation has been fairly accumulated, the government, the great trustee of all national property, may apply it to such objects as are most for the advantage of the state. This has been done in the case at Hughly, and might be done on similar grounds with many of the endowments of a religious nature in India. Many of the temples, once largely endowed, are now no longer frequented, and are allowed to go to decay; the revenues being quietly enjoyed, or long since alienated by private families. In such cases, they ought to be taken by government; as no private persons have a right to funds originally intended as pay for services once required by the community, but required no longer. In this way, without interfering with the religious usages of the natives, public funds might be raised for important

national objects. The same principle seems to point out the way in which all the funds devoted to the support of superstition, may gradually be transferred to more beneficial purposes. Government need do nothing whatever to prop up any religion, not even the Christian; but, as long as there are endowments requiring the interference of the laws, and the guardianship of government, there must be a certain degree of connexion between the state and religious institutions. This, however, need be no more than exists in England between the State and the Dissenters, whose property and endowments are all held under the sanction of the laws, and are available by government, when they can no longer be applied according to the will of the testator. Suppose the state in England were to levy a tax on all the people who attend the Anniversary meetings in London, in the month of May; and that many agents were dispersed over the country, to persuade people to attend them; and that all the arrangements of Exeter Hall, &c. were to be made by the magistrates, and so much laid on each ticket, that, after paying all expences, a certain sum might go the revenue, would not every one say, the state went out of its place? But in addition to this, suppose that the May meetings were, after all, superstitious assemblages, having many moral evils connected with them, of which the rulers were perfectly sensible; and yet, instead of merely providing against accidents likely to take place in crowds, by a good police, every thing was done by them to

make the meetings more attractive, merely in order to raise the amount of the tax—surely every one would allow, that such conduct was utterly unworthy of enlightened governors. But if such a minute interference by the state would be improper, even where the assemblages are for purposes of philanthropy, how much more so must it be, when it only gives *eclat* to delusion, and dazzles the eyes of a misled and deceived populace, by giving all the solemn sanction of state pageantry, to scenes of acknowledged folly, vice, and superstition ! It is quite a paradox, that a government, which by legislation, education, and political plans, is pulling down the whole original structure of native society, in order to amend or regenerate it, should, at the same time, be held in trammels by a few bigotted Bramins who are beginning to feel themselves so weak, that without government aid they cannot stand. But to return to the subject of Hindoo or Mohammedan endowments, the guardianship of which forms the apology of many for the government's identifying itself with idolatrous worship, and the internal arrangement of temples, so as in fact to treat Hinduism at some places, especially in the Madras Presidency, as if it were the established religion of the governors. Those who hold that one religion ought always to be established by the state ; and that the state, not being infallible, must be content to patronize and support, with peculiar favor, the creed of the majority will, no doubt, admit, that in India, Hinduism is entitled to this distinction. But then,



what would become of the claims of the Indian branch of the Episcopal Church, established and supported by the same Indian Government, out of compulsory taxes raised from the pockets of idolators? I am aware, that some of the supporters of the connexion with heathen temples, pilgrim's tax, &c., are by no means friendly to the establishment of a government Church in India; so that they cannot be accused of the inconsistency of appearing the zealous supporters of Hinduism in all its genuine grossness; and at the same time, the advocates for paying bishops and Christian clergy, out of the earnings of Hindoo industry: but surely the Court of Directors must have strange ideas on the subject, who can manifest their zeal, at one and the same time, for Christianity and Hinduism, by appointing bishops and clergy to promote the former, and order their civil and military officers to honor to the utmost the gods of the latter, with processions and military salutes.—“We send you,” say they to their public functionaries, “excellent and pious bishops to teach you to be good Christians; but command you, on pain of dismissal, to be devout Hindoos; and, if you find the country people under you flagging in their zeal for the idols, be sure you whip them thoroughly into their orthodoxy.”

The establishment of systems so diametrically opposite, seems contrary to all principle, and ought to be abandoned; though, of course, perfect liberty of conscience should be allowed. Every peaceable subject has a right to be protected in the

exercise of his religion, however superstitious it may be, so long as its rites are not opposed to public decency and morality. Where any superstition violates these, it is the duty of the state to interpose its authority; and where one set of religionists indulge in factious hostility towards another, so as to endanger the peace of society, government ought to interfere—not to take a side, and to determine creeds—but simply to prevent the strong from oppressing or persecuting the weak. Such are the functions often called into operation in India, where Hindoos and Musselmans, as well as the different sects of each class, are actuated by great hostility towards each other. They have frequently good reasons on both sides in their quarrels, since they are bent on mutual insult; and the government functionaries have at times a most delicate task to perform, which involves a considerable degree of interference on religious questions, so that they cannot, if they would, be without some connexion with the existing systems. Still, however, it does not require countenance to be given to their worship and other ceremonies, as at present sanctioned, and commanded at several places in Bengal, and to a far greater extent in the Madras country; but all might be accomplished without the least part being taken in their mummeries, or our seeming in the least to connect ourselves with their systems of worship. That all this may be effected without offending the natives, is clear from the fact, that it is done successfully already at the greatest seats

of idolatry, and the most crowded places of pilgrimage, Benares and Hurdwar. No tax is levied at Benares on pilgrims, and no interference whatever in the arrangements of religious matters takes place; though the resort to Juggarnath, compared with that to Benares, is so small, that, were it added to the latter, no very great increase would be discernible. Here there are no European functionaries to take part in the follies of idolatry *ex officio*; but simply the police of the city, to prevent during the great assemblages, those accidents and tumults that will naturally sometimes take place. If Benares, with nearly a hundred temples of the first order, and of great resort, with about a thousand others of an inferior description, and three hundred Musselman Mosques, can be managed without pilgrim-taxes, &c.; and if the myriads that swarm to it, not once a year only, but on every one of its endless holidays—men of all the tribes and tongues of India—can be left quietly to perform their ceremonies in their own way, what can there be in any other part of the country to render a government connexion with idolatry, necessary. If the natives can dispense with government honors being paid to the temples, gods, and Bramins of Benares—the Metropolis—the holiest of holies of Hindooism, is it likely that they would be so tenacious about those honors in other places? If the hundreds of thousands that annually frequent the *mela* at Hurdwar, not only from all the countries of India, but even from among the warlike tribes of Cabùl, Hindoo

Kosh, Turkéstan, and Tibet, can be kept in the utmost order by the local authorities, without any pilgrim's tax, might not the same be done at the stations of Allahabad, Gaya, and Juggurnath? The argument in favor of the pilgrim tax, derived from the value of the revenue, should never be listened to at all. It is a mere quibble. In a financial point of view, it is absurd to suppose, that if the trifling sum that is raised were necessary, it could not be raised by the country in some other way. The whole sum might easily be saved by dismissing the useless functionaries of the supreme court, or reducing any other burden on the country. The principle, however, should never for a moment be admitted, that the worship of God, either in a pure form, or a corrupt one, is a proper object of state taxation. What would be thought, if the Government of England, were it to place police at the doors of dissenting chapels, to demand a toll of every worshipper, merely assigning as the reason, that it is requisite to keep a police, lest, in such large congregations, some accidents requiring aid might occur? They would soon be told in tones not to be mistaken, that Dissenters paid for the police as well as others, and have a right to their services when they are required for the protection of person and property, as well as their neighbours, without a tax specifically for the purpose, being laid on their worship. The Hindoo is placed in precisely similar circumstances. He supports the police of the country, and the Established Church, by the taxes he pays

for general purposes, and his own religion voluntarily, and yet he is asked to pay a tax at his temple gate, or at the Ghaut of the Ganges, deemed peculiarly holy, under the plea of its being to support a police, to whose services on such an occasion, he is already entitled. The thing is unjust to the Hindoo, apart from all the gross inconsistency of a government composed of professed Christians, becoming almost directly the promoters of superstition, in order to swell a revenue, of the most objectionable kind. I shall not enlarge on this subject, as I do not think it necessary to enter into details; most of which are in fact already before the public. 'The question should be incessantly agitated, till the government be brought to take it up thoroughly. It is certainly matter of surprise, that a government, in most respects wisely and benevolently conducted, should adhere to such an inconsistency; but this, it is to be expected, will not long be the case. It is to be hoped, that soon, while every class of religionists shall enjoy, under a paternal rule, every degree of rational toleration, Christian men, *in* as well as *out* of office, will appear consistent, maintaining their own holy faith pure in the eyes of the heathen, while they bear a clear and intelligible testimony against idolatry, will, at the same time exhibit a kind and conciliating spirit to all who are without the pale of the Christian Church.

Yours sincerely,

W. B.

## LETTER XVI.

## EXTENT OF MISSIONARY SUCCESS IN INDIA.

DEAR FRIEND,

A great deal has been said and written about the extent of Missionary success in India. Some maintain that the success has been next to nothing, and altogether disproportioned to the extent of the means employed. While others, equally well acquainted with the nature, and results of the work, maintain that, under all existing circumstances, the measure of success has been highly encouraging, an individual or two have declared, that we have done nothing at all, and, therefore, ought to return home, or go to countries where God is blessing the labors of Missionaries; and, at the other extreme, may be found a few, who look so much to the bright side, as to think our success has been even far beyond what we could have reasonably expected. On these extreme opinions it is needless to dwell. They are the natural result of morbidness on the one hand, and of unreasonable sanguineness on the other. But with respect to the more moderate, though opposite views on the subject, held by the greater number of Missionaries, as is usual in all such cases, "much may be said on both sides;" and after all, the truth may not be found entirely on either. Nothing is more striking, though quite

natural to mankind, than the manifest bias given to opinions on both sides, by the disposition of the party, as well as the extent of his knowledge about Indian and Missionary affairs, before he comes to the country. One young man on his arrival at Calcutta, and his first sight of the infant native churches, and also of the heathen audiences of the Missionaries, is so disappointed that he thinks the Missionary reports must have been greatly exaggerated; and he, at once, forms an opinion, that really nothing worthy of notice has yet been done. Another comes perhaps at the same time, and is much pleased with all he sees—every thing comes up to his expectations, and he thinks a great work has been effected, and that still greater and more encouraging prospects are presenting themselves. Now both these individuals had perused the same Missionary reports before they came: their general reading about India had been nearly the same; and, when they came out, they saw the same things, and yet their conclusions are perfectly opposite. It is evident the difference lay in the medium through which the objects were viewed, and not in the things themselves. In all probability the one had all along been deficient, in forming any proper idea of the vast difference of circumstances between England and India, and when he found nothing like the English standard which he expected, he at once concluded, that exaggeration had taken place; whereas the exaggeration was all in his own mind, from his application of a standard

unsuited to the actual state of things. The other again had formed a clear, and perhaps even an extravagant notion of the peculiar difficulties attending the work—and of the degraded state of the people, and of the very little to be expected in the first converts, and, therefore, he is delighted to find, that things are not worse; and, instead of being discouraged, his hopes rise higher than before. The impressions, however, thus received at the very outset, cleave to the individuals even after they are much better acquainted with the real state of things, and greatly modify and direct their opinions, even where the whole seems so much a matter of fact, that a greater degree of unanimity in the various estimates might be expected. With regard to the opinion of those who think, very little indeed has been effected, it may be remarked, that it is principally founded on the paucity of actual converts, and on the deficiencies of those, or at least many of those, who profess themselves such; while, in general, they either overlook, or estimate at comparatively little value, the work of a preparatory nature that has been done. Those who take a more favorable view of the amount of success, while they do not profess to regard the number of converts as great, maintain, that the work of a preparatory nature in the translation and writing of books, and tracts, the forming of schools, establishing of local societies, and the maturing of both agents and plans, forms in itself a great amount of success, as it has put us in a position for promoting direct conversion,



which we never could have occupied without it. Both parties have good ground to reason on; but it is clear they reason on different principles. The former party seem to me wrong in laying so much stress on positive conversion, at this stage of the work, since hitherto, most of the Missionary body have been employed either in preparing ammunition and arms, digging trenches, and erecting batteries for the siege of the enemy's fortress, or have themselves been only recruits under training. All that could have been expected, in such circumstances, was occasional conversions, like desertions from the enemy; but any thing like conquest, or extensive conversion, could scarcely have been looked for, where the direct attempts were made on so small a scale. At the same time, it may be doubted whether those who are better satisfied with the amount of success, do not lay too much stress on, and attach too much value to what is usually called preparatory work. Not a little of this work has been done prematurely—not before it was required—but before the laborers were sufficiently qualified for it. Such has been the case, in various instances, with respect to translations and books, tracts, &c. which are now laid aside as deficient; and others are yet required to be superseded by better productions.

However valuable such labors may be, I consider the policy of not a few of our earlier Missionaries who postponed preaching, as one of the causes, not only of the fewness of converts, but also of the very imperfect character of the

literary works themselves. It may be laid down as an axiom, that no language can be written with ease and propriety, except by those who daily speak and write in it; so that to expect a man who merely devotes his hours of study to learning and writing a language, to prepare such books as will be popular among the people who speak it, is unreasonable. Hence many of the productions of the first Missionaries, who believed it their duty to engage in such work alone, are now allowed to go out of print. Had they cultivated speaking more, they themselves would have seen and remedied their defects. The preaching Missionaries have, after all, been the men whose productions in general are most useful; and by them also the best translations have been made.

Had less consequence been attached to preparatory work, and direct preaching been cultivated more, there is reason to believe that there would have been more direct success. But some one may say: 'Would you have allowed translations, &c., to stand still?' By no means. On the contrary, I have no doubt, that these would have been further advanced, and in a better state than they now are, had preaching been universally adopted as the principal work. Preaching Missionaries, from their greater intimacy with the people, would have known much better what sort of translations and books were required; so that when they devoted a portion of attention to them, their labor would have all told on the object, and not been frequently lost, as in the other case, in the pre-

paration of works which were not suitable, or which, though good in themselves, were not required by any immediate want among the people. Thus, while I think preparatory work should not have been neglected, it seems to me the cause would have been better answered, had it been left to the gradually advancing demands of the agents employed, who would have found out more effectually what was required to facilitate their labors, than those could be expected to do, who merely devoted themselves to such undertakings. At the same time, it seems to me, that those who form very low opinions of the amount of success, do not attach sufficient importance to those labors by which we now occupy a far better position than that occupied by our predecessors. They also over-rate the amount of direct means hitherto employed—*i. e.* actual preaching and conversation among the heathen. Most of the exertions formerly put forth, though useful, were not calculated to lead to immediate results in conversion, but to produce facilities for after labors of a more direct kind. It is only a very few years since preaching to any considerable extent began to be employed. Even at present the number of Missionaries in the country who preach to the heathen is not nearly the half of the whole number. Some few, have charges of various kinds, which prevent them from being able to preach in the native languages, or at least to the heathen, but the greater number of those who are not efficient in this respect are juniors, too recently come into the

country to be able to be so; but, of course, these will soon, it is hoped, be fully engaged.

The principal institutions having the greatest number of European Missionaries in Northern India, are the Church, and London Missionary Societies. The former has at present, besides several useful laborers brought forward in the country, ten European ordained Missionaries, all of whom are engaged in direct Missionary work, and able to preach in the native languages to the heathen. This Society is, I believe, in the enviable position of being able to say that every one of its European agents is fully engaged in active Missionary work, and not one of them unable to speak the language. The London Society, besides some agents who are natives of the country, have fourteen European ordained Missionaries. Of these, one is engaged in English labor—being pastor of the Union Chapel in Calcutta: and other two are recently come out, so that they are not yet sufficiently masters of the language to preach in it. The London Society has also the greatest number of laborers of considerable standing, of any Society in the country; so that, on the whole, it may perhaps be considered in the most efficient state, at least so far as European agents are concerned.

The Baptist Mission, now reunited by the reconciliation of the Serampore and Home Societies, has, I think, nine European ordained Missionaries. One of these manages their large printing establishment, and another is pastor of an English church, but engages largely in literary labors in

the native languages. Most of the others labor considerably among the heathen, but have nearly all of them small English churches. They have however a larger body of country-born laborers, and a greater number of stations, than any other Society in the country. Along with this body may be classed the Cuttack Mission of the General Baptists, and that of the American Baptists, the exact number of whose laborers, though small, I cannot just now ascertain.

The Mission of the Church of Scotland in Calcutta has at present three ordained laborers, engaged principally in conducting their well-known and extensive seminary. None of them, so far as I know, has yet begun to preach; the services at their chapels being generally conducted by the Brethren of the London Society. But if not actually begun, one of them at least is, I believe, now able to do so, and will soon enter on this work.

The Propagation Society labors principally in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, and has also a station in the upper country at Cawnpore. With the exception of the Professors of Bishop's College, I believe all its present agents are men raised up in the country, and educated at that Institution. Some of them preach to the heathen, but the greater part of the Missionary labor is carried on by native catechists.

The last Society to be noticed, as the latest that entered the field, is the American Presbyterian Society. This Society has only been a few years in the country; but they have already eleven

laborers sent out from America ; several of whom, however, are not ordained. Most of them are recently come, and even the seniors are not, so far as I am aware, yet engaged fully in preaching ; not being so far advanced in the language as to be fit efficiently to take up this important work. Their Missions are all above Benares, in the North-Western provinces.

From the above sketch it will be seen, that there are not in the whole of Northern India, above 30 European and American Missionaries, belonging to all the Societies combined, at present capable of preaching in the native language. One third of these may reasonably be supposed not to be highly efficient ; as, in the above estimate, some are included who are still of but short standing ; and some others whose English labors are so considerable, that it is impossible that either their time or strength should admit of their laboring so extensively among the heathen as those who are entirely devoted to the work. Small as this number of preaching Missionaries may appear, it is the highest that has ever been reached in Northern India. Five or six years ago, it was not above one half of what it is now. In fact it is not many years since there were only four or five European Missionaries engaged peculiarly in this most direct, and most important of all the branches of Evangelical labor ; and the majority of the present body of preachers, have sprung up within five or six years, at most, so that their labors are but of recent origin. It is obvious then, that from such

a small preaching agency, no very extensive work of conversion could have reasonably been expected; and I have shewn in previous letters, that nearly all the success hitherto has been the result of preaching.

As long therefore as the great mass of agency was devoted to schools, translations, &c., though profitably enough employed, it was not natural to look for great results, in that for which such labors were at best but initiatory. These facts must be constantly kept in view in judging of our progress. We have no right to expect conversion in India any more than in England, from means which are not directly used for that purpose. It is necessary that the preacher, to be efficient, should have good translations of the Scriptures in his hands, as well as to be abundantly provided with tracts, &c., both to refute the erroneous doctrines of the heathen, and to teach the truths of the Gospel. But it is clear that neither translators nor tract writers can expect converts while engaged in their work. The converts that may be made ultimately, will be but in part their spiritual children, and in part those of the preacher. All that they aim at is to produce the aids and instruments by which the more active or aggressive laborer may carry on his work, and without which he lies under every disadvantage. Though converts have been made, and in some places not a few, the period of extensive conversion could not as yet in the very nature of things, have taken place in this part of

India, without a miracle—for the obvious reason, that there have not been such extensive labors, of the character usually required in every country, as could by any possibility have produced such a result. Some may say I have under-rated the number of actual preachers. All I can say is, that I know the majority personally, and have had the best information respecting the rest, except the Baptist Brethren in Orissa, with whom I am not personally acquainted; nor have I heard particularly of the number of preachers among them. But this could only alter my estimate by one or two either way.

The above remarks apply only to agency purely European: we shall now consider how far the defect in preaching has been supplied by Anglo-Indian and native agency. The raising up of this sort of agency is in itself part of the success in question; as both the East Indian and native laborers, have generally been the fruits of the exertions made by the European Missionary. The principal Society having a considerable number of East Indian laborers, has all along been the Serampore, now merged in the Baptist Society. Among their East Indian agents, they have had several very useful men, and some who have had a considerable degree of success; but the greater number, being engaged more or less in schools, &c., and some even in worldly occupations, by which they have supported themselves, at least in part, have not preached so much as might have been desired; and not a few have



been fit only to converse and distribute tracts. The system of placing them single-handed at stations far asunder, especially as they were in general men of little education, and imperfect preparation for the work, has in my opinion greatly hindered their usefulness. The native part of the agency is of course still very imperfect; but some of the native preachers of the Baptist body, I understand, are very useful men, and contribute very much to the success of that body in Bengal; though in Hindustan, as yet, they are more deficient. The country-born and native agency of the Church and London Societies is more limited than that of the Baptists—arising principally from the more recent date of their Missions, but also from a desire to avoid the error of the Baptist body in pushing forward too rapidly a large number of ill-instructed, and, in many cases, untried men. Both these bodies, however, especially the Church Society, have some very valuable laborers of both classes, one or two of whom rank among the best Missionaries in the country.

The native agency of all the Societies is yet in its infancy; and it will take very many years to bring it to a state of much efficiency—though, even in its present state, it is almost essential to considerable success, as the native readers, though themselves incapable of bringing inquirers forward to any considerable extent of knowledge, are exceedingly useful as a medium of access between those who wish to enquire, and the European Missionaries.

These remarks will show, that apart from the direct labors of European Missionaries, we have not as yet any considerable agency on which to rely. All is still so immature, that there is little hope of much good being done by natives, except in conjunction with Europeans, qualified from their knowledge of the language, and the character of the people, to be their leaders and models in preaching, as well as in almost every part of Missionary work.

The native agency is, however, daily improving, both in number and suitableness: though hitherto its value has been comparatively small.

The amount of direct Missionary agency being thus reviewed, it now only remains to consider the number of converts, to give an idea of the proportionate amount of success. There are no data on which to go, in order to ascertain the exact amount of converts belonging to the various societies. It has been recently stated, that in and around Calcutta, there are about 2000; and this number is receiving a considerable annual increase. At none of the other stations in Bengal, are they very numerous; but almost every station has a small number of professing Christians. At Serampore, Cutwa, Burdwan, Krishnagur, Berhampore, and many other places, churches exist; but at most of them, only the merest germ of a Christian community, which, unless carefully attended to, could not long continue to live. On entering Hindustan, we find small native churches at Monghyr, Patna, Ghoruckpore, Benares,

Chunar, Mirzapore, Allahabad, Cawnpore, Agra, Murut, &c. The largest of these are perhaps those of the Church Society, at Ghoruckpore, and Chunar—their existence and regular supply having been of longer duration than the others. Exclusive of Christian children in schools, I should not think that the Christians in Bengal and Hindustan, purely natives—that is, not counting Portuguese, and others of foreign descent—can exceed 5000, and may even fall below that number. There are also a good many who have been baptized, and profess to be Christians, not connected with any Mission, but found generally in the service of Europeans in different places. All the difficulties and all the deficiencies of the agency employed at most stations in the early part of the work, prevent me from being surprised at their not having had much success; but, at the same time, I confess there is no cause for much congratulation, but much for deep humility respecting the progress made. Success has been such as to show that the natives can be Christianized, even if we had not been sure of that from the word of God; but I acknowledge that I am not disposed to feel satisfied with what has been done, even considering all the difficulties, and the smallness of the means. I feel grateful to God for what he has been pleased to accomplish; but instead of being able to say to our friends at home, that the Lord has done great things by our means among the Gentiles, we, I fear, must still feel humbled, that we have not been considered worthy to build the temple,

though we have been allowed to collect a few materials and remove some of the rubbish. Whatever may have been the cause, it does not seem that the Lord has yet considered us worthy to witness the display of his power ; for even where the Gospel has been fully and faithfully made known, results such as we hear of in many places, have not yet taken place in India. There is, however, another view of the case, which is in some measure calculated to console us when depressed, by discouragement from the fewness of converts, and that is—the effect which our labors are manifestly producing in gradually preparing the minds of the people for the reception of the Gospel. Where Missionaries have labored a considerable time, a manifest change has taken place on the minds of the people. Prejudices have diminished, and a good deal of information respecting the real nature of our religion has been spread abroad. But the most important, and perhaps the least noticed point of all, is, that the heaven is working gradually, and moulding their opinions on moral and religious subjects, into a state more favorable to calm and serious views of the real condition of man in this life, and his destiny in the world to come. Their notions of the character of God, the monstrously loose views of which, held by the heathen, are the source of most of the grossness of idolatry, are beginning to improve ; and the Christian ideas of his justice, purity, goodness, and utter freedom from evil, are working their way insensibly into their minds, and preparing them

for the exercise of their faculties, in detecting the absurdities of their own popular superstitions. The formation of a conscience among the people, by sound truth being so often declared, is proceeding slowly, but surely, to destroy the dreadful apathy of their minds to right and wrong ; so that, without being aware of it, many are drinking in sentiments, which, as they become matured and naturalized in their minds, will make them incapable of bowing down their understandings and hearts so entirely to the yoke of spiritual bondage, as their fathers for ages have done. The public reiteration of so many great principles of truth, have met with such a response in the minds and hearts of many, that nothing but the power of custom, and the dread of temporal evil, prevent them from utterly disregarding idolatry. In large audiences, idolatry can often get no defender ; and even the usual quibbles by which moral truth is often got rid of, are given up publicly as untenable, though they form part of their most sacred books. The Bramins confess, that, though the “Padries” are not at present getting many converts, they are turning the minds of the people ; and that their hopes of our failure rests entirely on the expectation, that we shall abandon the work in despair, before the people are ready *en masse* to join us ; for they generally believe, that few will dare to be Christians till the minds of large bodies, or of the majority in any given place, are made up. In this, perhaps, they are not far wrong ; but, at all events, they acknowledge that we are

“spoiling the minds of the people;” *i. e.* we are making them think less of Hinduism, and feel too much satisfied with a foreign religion. Some of the Bramins say, they believe the people will all become Christians; and that they themselves will have no objection to do so, when once the thing becomes general. Of course this is not the sort of conversion we desire; but the existence of such a feeling among the natives, shows that, as to the production of a general impression, which, after all, must precede any extensive conversion, our efforts have not by any means been in vain. At the same time it should not be supposed, that an impression like this is at all general over the country. It exists only in neighbourhoods where considerable Missionary labor has been going on. Those stations, be it remembered, are few and far between; and it will take long before even the smallest impression can reach thousands of districts, teeming with millions of immortal souls. Few have any proper idea of the extent and population of India. Only a few places are familiar by name to Europeans, either from their being famous in history, or selected as English posts. A few places only have yet received a degree of Christian influence; but the mighty mass, filling the thousands and tens of thousands of cities, towns, villages, and hamlets of India, has not yet begun to move. No power has yet been called in, that could produce any such general impression on such a mass of human beings; and, though we ought to be grateful even for the small number of

converts, and for the change gradually going on where our laborers are employed, we cannot expect general movements, till our efforts are at least ten-fold what they are now.

Yours, &c.

W. B.

## LETTER XVII.

### CHARACTER OF NATIVE CONVERTS.

DEAR FRIEND,

Another subject on which rather conflicting opinions exist, is the Character of the Native Christians. Not a few have exceedingly low ideas of the sincerity, as well as moral character of most of those who profess to be believers in Christ; and others carry their exculpation of them so far, that it may be doubted if the cause be at all the better for the apologies on this subject so often brought forward.

That the native Christians, as a body, should be far inferior, not only in knowledge, but in the general exhibition of the Christian character, to the members of a well-constituted church of professing Christians in Europe, seems so obviously natural to expect, that no one need be surprised to be told as a matter of fact, that they *are* inferior to such a body; and will, in all probability, be so for

a long period, whatever may be the zeal and labor employed for their improvement.

The character of British Christians is not the product of one age. It has been the growth of many ages, and of many and long-continued external influences, as well as of the converting power of the Divine word and Spirit. When the Gospel comes with power to a man's heart in our native land, it no doubt often finds him deeply depraved and degraded; still, however, he has many thoughts and feelings of a Christian nature, and a conscience formed and enlightened to a great extent by those countless forms of Christian moral influence, by which, through a long period of time, the national character has been moulded to its present form. Hence even men who have not at first had a religious education, almost immediately on conversion, assume all the modes and consistencies of Christian character; while those, on the other hand, who have been religiously educated, frequently exhibit scarcely any external change of conduct—that having been previously so much formed on the precepts of Christianity, no great change was required, though they may themselves be conscious of a great alteration for the better, in the general tone and tendency of their feelings and affections.

The case with the heathen convert is vastly different. His conversion, even when sincere, is in a more remarkable manner, a “passing from death to life;” and is it any wonder if it should often be a process of slow and difficult develop-



ment? I have known many instances of conversion among the most careless and abandoned of English soldiery in India, men neglected from their childhood, and sadly depraved; and yet it is astonishing how soon, compared with a convert from heathenism, such a man throws off his irreligious habits of thought and expression, and falls with much consistency into those of pious society. So much have the truths of Christianity modified or formed the national character and habits, that even the most wicked men among us, seem more naturally and easily to adopt the full and consistent profession of the Gospel, than even the most regular and respectably behaved among the Hindoos or Musselmans. With these, Christianity has to operate in a more thorough way—new modelling almost every mode of thought, speech, and action; destroying almost every idea, on a vast variety of subjects, that previously existed; and imparting new ones in their place, so as to make the man intellectually as well as morally, “a new creature.” That a man’s whole mental structure, formed out of a vast conglomeration of all the accumulations of years, drawn from the traditions of his fathers, and all the converse of his contemporaries, should be swept away, and a new and complete edifice at once erected in its place, so perfect as to bear the utmost scrutiny of judges, is surely expecting too much in ordinary circumstances. And yet we cannot consider a man a real convert, unless he possesses the essential parts of the true Christian character. What then are those essentials? There

is, no doubt, a marked distinction in many respects, between a converted and an unconverted man; while, at the same time, it is not always, that the former exhibits all that consistency with Gospel precepts, which his conscience dictates. The failings and infirmities, even of a nature in which grace has begun to operate, are often of a kind calculated to throw doubt over the reality of a change of heart, especially in those whose habits both of thought and action were formerly much corrupted. The reformation of character begun in regeneration, is not complete, but is a gradual process; and where the obstacles to be overcome are great and numerous—where the temper and habits have never been subjected to moral restraint, but require to have the most pernicious evils rooted out, the work of moral renovation has often to proceed with a slow pace, and may sometimes almost seem not to advance at all.

The state of new converts in this country is of this description:—Even the best of them, when they were in a heathen state, were so utterly destitute of any proper sense of a standard of right and wrong, that though they had an accusing or excusing conscience, they were not accustomed to regard its dictates, or walk by its rules. The voice was too feeble to be heard amidst the din and turmoil of passion; and backed by no righteous revealed law, carrying along with it the awful sanctions derived from the knowledge of God, and a state of everlasting retribution, it was too powerless to become their guide or the controller of

their lives. Passion, prejudice, and interest, were the only motives from which they were accustomed to act; and their best conduct was either the result of mere natural temperament, social restraints, prudential regard to their own interest, or the love of worldly applause. Any thing like acting from the higher motives, by which actions are referred to the judgment of God and the world to come, could scarcely be supposed to exist where gods more vicious than men, are believed to be the judges; and where a trifling ceremony, pilgrimage, &c. are deemed more than sufficient to remove the guilt and consequences of ages of wickedness. That men grown up to maturity in such a system, with all their moral ideas deranged and corrupted—men who never knew how to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and who scarcely ever imagined that honesty and veracity were, strictly speaking, expected from mortals;—I say, that such men, to whom every strict moral principle or restraint is entirely a new thing, should become at once models of every virtue, as soon as their eyes have been but a little opened, by hearing the word of God and believing its first principles, is not according to the ordinary course of Divine operation on the minds of men.

Not a few cases have taken place in India, as well as in other parts of the world, of great and sudden transformations of character; and these are the most delightful of all, affording, as they do, such evidence of the power of the truth as must tell with great force on the minds of others. But,

however delightful and encouraging to our faith and patience, such displays of the power and grace of God are ; and however much they may be desirable for the manifestation of the truth, it must be confessed, that they are comparatively rare everywhere, and rarer still where the deep stains of polluting heathenism, have for ages of vice uncontrolled and ignorance unmitigated, been ingrained in the national and social character of a people. The greater the mass exposed to corruption, the greater the corruption of the different parts ; and hence in a state of society, like that existing in India, though not manifest at once, there is a virulence of moral disease, which it does not seem possible to eradicate by any thing like ordinary means. And converts are in many instances not cases of cure, but cases of convalescence, requiring the utmost attention to prevent relapse. They have for the most part been baptized on a profession of faith, sustained for some time amidst much opposition and reproach, and which gave reason to believe them sincere. Different opinions may be held about the length of probation necessary. My own experience would lead me to doubt much of the propriety of a very long probation. It damps and discourages the mind, and tends rather to induce apathy than zealous enquiry, and the ready adoption of new habits : on the other hand, a ready reception of all enquirers, without due information of their characters and motives, is, without doubt, calculated to pull down heathenism, and especially caste ; but must necessarily injure the

character of pure Christianity, and ultimately retard its real progress. There can be no doubt, that the apostles baptized all who professed to believe, without waiting to see whether they would act according to the laws of Christ or not; or whether or not they would so persevere as to attach themselves to each other, and the Church of Christ. It does not seem that the converts in the apostolic age, had so many difficulties to contend with from the state of existing society, so long as the government was neutral, as the converts from Hinduism have to encounter. They were protected by the laws as well as the latter, and even more so; for the laws of inheritance in India prevent a Christian from inheriting the property of his Hindoo father, while those of Rome took no notice of such matters, but left the conscience free. The primitive Christians had not to suffer so much from social persecution as those have, who leave Hinduism for the Gospel, since they had not to break through the entanglements of caste, or the same system of family bondage.

There would, therefore, be nothing in the peculiar state of India, to prevent the practice of the apostolic plan, since equally many reasons exist to deter men from professing faith in Christ; and few of a worldly nature to induce them to do so, were not the whole state of the case very much altered by the British being the rulers of the country, and the supposed distributors of patronage and wealth. This circumstance has, no doubt, led some of the more ignorant of the natives to

imagine, that, if they were to adopt the religion of the English, they would likely obtain some situation or employment, that would more than recompense them for the loss of caste and former connexions. This is most frequently the case with persons who are in some way or other on bad terms with their relations. Great care is necessary, and is generally taken to keep back such candidates; but I believe that few such have been received—they having, for the most part, withdrawn before being baptized, on finding that worldly objects could not be attained. It ought not, however, to be supposed, that all who come at first from such worldly motives as enquirers, are to be unceremoniously rejected; the case is often very different. Some of the most decidedly pious and consistent converts have first come about the Missionaries in this way, and have found good to their souls. Some family affair, such as a lawsuit about property, &c. has sometimes been the means of setting a man free from the trammels of relations, and the fear of breaking caste: so that he has been at greater liberty to follow any convictions that he may have received; and hence he is in a state of mind more favorable to his making a change and is not, therefore, so fortified against what he hears. Some, whose first steps towards Christianity have been of this doubtful description, have even turned out good, faithful, and zealous preachers—the state of their minds on worldly subjects having been overruled for the good of

their souls, by bringing them into contact with the Gospel.

This state of things, however, has, I fear, introduced not a few into the Christian body, whose faith has not been sincere; and perhaps, in some instances, has mingled a little of worldly leaven with the motives of individuals, whose real faith, as evinced by their conduct, it would be impossible without a violation of charity to deny.

It thus becomes a difficult point for a Missionary to decide. Where worldly motives are manifest, the way is plain—the candidate is of course rejected at once—but perhaps all that can be detected, is only a mixed feeling of hope, that in becoming a Christian, he will not in worldly things be a loser, since the Christians will either give him or get for him, some means of living, at least as good as his former. It can, of course, be no objection to a man, that, when he takes a step that will at once cut off all his means of living, as it drives him from his friends and relations for ever, he should be a little anxious about his future support; and often, unless something is done to devise means by which new converts may obtain a livelihood, some of them might starve, and others, in the early and weaker stages of their Christian course, might be so greatly discouraged as to give their tempters an undue advantage over them. The apostolic churches certainly did not reject all who were unable to support themselves; but, on the contrary, made the noblest efforts for supplying them with the necessities of life, though they did

not feed the idle and lazy at the expense of the rich or industrious. In India it often happens, that a new convert cannot possibly for a time, after his relations, and the heathen in general, have abandoned him, get the means of earning a livelihood. In such cases, the very least aid imaginable is given him, till he can get employment in some way or other; and, on the whole, I believe scarcely any one finds that his circumstances are bettered by the change, except when, from being set free from prejudices of caste, some are able to engage in employments of a better class than their former state introduced them to, where each caste monopolizes some branch of business.<sup>4</sup> Almost all that could have been done, has been done, to prevent any from thinking that they will secure worldly advantages by joining the Christians; and I believe the feeling is declining: but as long as it lasts in any degree, it greatly enhances the difficulty of judging, respecting the characters of applicants. No rules can be laid down on a subject of this nature, since every case has peculiarities of its own; but prudence and caution are always required, to prevent equally the rash rejection of those whom God has called to come out from among the heathen, and the precipitate admission of those who mind earthly things.

These difficulties are of course incident only to the day of small things: for when once a considerable Christian community shall have been formed, no such delusions are likely to prevail among the



surrounding heathen; and, on the other hand, there will be scope enough in their own body for the exercise of industry, so as to render them to a great extent independent of the heathen. In village communities such difficulties exist only in a small degree, the people having their fields, &c., and can cultivate them without being under obligations to the heathen; but in towns where men live chiefly by trade, the loss of caste is but too often the loss of bread.

These remarks are rather a digression than a part of my subject, but they show in some degree the peculiar difficulties of forming and regulating churches, on which most have in the first instance to lean for advice and counsel, and, even for some aid in obtaining a livelihood, on the Missionaries. They are in many respects mere children, and, in more ways than one, are much dependent on their spiritual parents. And, as in all families the character of the children is greatly modified by the method of training adopted by their parents, so it is with native converts in this country. To manage them well, requires much care, temper, and prudence. The people are on the whole of a teachable disposition, and will generally receive to a great extent the impressions derived from the peculiar character, example, and instructions of their spiritual guides. But the grossness of their ideas is often discouraging; and nothing is more common than for a man whom we know to be a genuine convert, doing or saying something which shocks our sense of propriety, though it may not be of a nature

positively sinful. This of course arises from the dreadful disarrangement of all their moral feelings, and also from many usages and modes of life in which they have been brought up, from the old associations of which they may to a certain extent have got free, but which still come back in the hour of peculiar temptation. Hence it sometimes happens that a native Christian, will walk very consistently as it respects almost every moral principle, till some peculiar affair arise—some misunderstanding, in which he thinks his character involved, or some false charges brought against him, and then he will lose all command over his feelings and words, and commit himself so as to bring the severest censure on himself by uncandid assertions and abuse; all in the form of retaliation, which at a more sober moment he would at once retract. In this way many of the habits of the heathen cleave to the first converts; and even when their general character and conduct may be good, one always trembles to see them on the brink of peculiar temptation, especially of those temptations which tend to lead them to the commission of such sins as they were accustomed to practice in their heathen state, without restraint or conscience of wrong.

There are black and dreadful sins common among heathens, which Christians would not even name, and many of our converts have been familiar with such awful enormities, before they heard the Gospel at all, or came under any system of moral discipline. How difficult it must be to

purify the minds of such from all the pollution with which for years they have been contaminated. Over these evils how many faithful Missionaries have spent sleepless nights, when, from the known wickedness of the whole society around, and the familiarity which his inquirers, or converts have with such depravity, he has doubted and trembled for their safety.

As long as Christians are so few, and the heathen so numerous, all the *eclat* of society is with the party opposed to the Gospel. Hence great danger exists of heathenish ideas and habits retaining a considerable influence over the minds of many, and there is much difficulty in the way of entirely bringing them into conformity with the rules and precepts of our religion. It is no doubt true, that some of the ideas and usages which long experience has brought into Christian practice, are not absolutely commanded in Scripture; so that a considerable diversity may exist in the practice of the Christians of different and widely varied countries, who after all may be sound in the faith, so far as regards its essential principles. The Indian Christians, even when more fully matured than they are, will never be exactly the same as those of England and Scotland; the climates and general manners being so different, give rise to customs and modes of thought, very different from those of the same faith in another state of things. They may nevertheless be the same in the belief of every essential doctrine, to the extent in which they have enjoyed the means of learning it, and in the

practice of every essential virtue, so far as it has been brought home to their minds. Many of the descendents of the Portuguese and other settlers in India, are in an exceedingly low and degraded condition, and their habits are generally idle and debasing. Still they pass under the name of Christians, most of them professing to be Roman Catholics. The converts from among the heathen, have not unfrequently been brought into a good deal of contact with these people, and in many instances the effects of their example, have been seen, in their acquiring habits by no means consistent with strict piety; and some of these have at first been adopted under the idea of their being considered venial among Christians—a mistake which they fell into, not unnaturally, on seeing them prevalent among people bearing the Christian name.

Another evil to which the character of many of the native Christians have been exposed, is that arising from their being often engaged as servants by Europeans, and moved about to various parts of the country among the heathen, and most frequently deprived of the means of grace. Scarcely any Europeans are stationary in this country who do not get servants that move with them; and being for the most part military, these join in the general rabble of camp-followers—a bad school for morals in every country. Native converts if thus employed, are more likely to deteriorate than improve, especially when all their fellow servants are heathen. This scattering about of many of

the converts, is a thing which Missionaries cannot prevent, though they have labored to do so ; service being often the only way in which they can procure a livelihood. It is no doubt better in every respect, that the people should have trades and means of subsistence, in such places as enable us to keep them fully together for instruction and edification ; but this cannot be done with all, unless where they form mere village communities, depending on their fields.

There are many other things which I might notice to show the moral disadvantages under which both teachers and people labor, in the present infant state of the Christian body in India, sufficient to account for various deficiencies that no doubt exist among not a few of those who have made a profession. Many of the converts would be an honor to any church in the world ; but it must be confessed the majority even of the sincere, are only babes in Christ. Still in their circumstances they could hardly by any possibility have been otherwise. No one can say to what extent positive insincerity has existed or does exist. The Missionaries are not all equally strict, nor are all Missions conducted on the same principle. The standards for admission are various, as well as the difficulties of making a profession, and the encouragements or discouragements to do so. Hence I believe there are some churches in which a good deal of positive insincerity exists, and others in which, however weak and wavering some may be, there are few whose motives are not on-

the whole pure, and who have not the root of the matter in them.

On the whole I do not think the general character of the native Christians lower than, all things considered, might have been reasonably expected; though it cannot be denied that it falls below the standard to which we wish to see it raised. It is however gradually improving, and a second generation is beginning to mingle with the first, who have had far greater advantages than the first adult converts could obtain. The increase of good translations of the Scriptures, and books of various kinds, as well as of good Christian schools, will every year give greater facilities for improvement of every kind. Vigorous and continued pastoral and Missionary labor conjoined, while it swells the number, warms up the mass to a sounder and more healthy state of Christian life and energy. As long as a few straggling shrubs are scattered over the barren waste, who can wonder at their being stunted and sapless? But how different is their appearance when the whole has been brought into cultivation, and the desert on which they formerly pined, has been turned into smiling and fertile fields. In India we have penetrated the dense moral jungle, and by great labor we have cleared some little spots, and planted trees of righteousness; the pestilential air of the uncut jungle has destroyed some, and stunted others, but some have sprung up healthy plants, so as to prove, that though exotics, they can be, and have been, naturalized to the soil—and that we only

want more instruments to cut away the deadly mass around, that the life-giving winds of heaven may freely blow over our plantations, to turn them into the garden of the Lord. The Gospel is no less powerful in India, than it is in any other part of the world; but the obstructions to its operation have been, and still are peculiarly great. Let us therefore labor and pray for the removal of those obstacles, and the rich communication of the Divine blessing, and not only will conversions be as numerous as in other places, but the character of the converts will be equally pure and blameless.

Yours, &c.

W. B.

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## LETTER XVIII.

### PROSPECTS OF THE MISSIONARY WORK.

DEAR FRIEND,

After the discussion of so many topics connected with Missionary work in this country, it may now be asked what are its prospects? Are they such as to encourage the Churches of Britain and America, not only to continue their efforts, but to enlarge them so as to embrace to a greater extent the immense field which India presents? This question is one, that whether answered in the affirmative or the negative, ought not to make any very marked difference in our conduct. The

duty to preach the Gospel to every creature, is clear from the word of God itself: and the fact that India is quite open to our efforts, and no Divine direction has been received not to preach the word in it, as was for some wise purpose given to the Apostles with regard to Proconsular Asia, where they were forbidden for a time to preach the Gospel, but where afterwards by the power of the Spirit, it achieved its greatest triumph, renders it impossible to doubt that we should persevere, even were our prospects much darker than they have ever been in India. It would be the duty of the Christian Church to fill India with the Gospel, even had we as yet not had a single convert, and at present no immediate prospect of one. True conversion, though the consequence of the Word, is so only by the operation of the Holy Spirit along with it—and therefore, though we have little reason to believe that the Spirit is withheld from the suitable believing and devout ministrations of the word for any great length of time; yet we have no means of judging of the reasons why such Divine influence is in some cases delayed beyond the usual period. Nor are we responsible for direct conversion, though deeply responsible for the proper and persevering use of all the external means, as well as the exercise of faith and prayer, without which success is, if ever, rarely obtained. Though these principles may be admitted, every Christian feels that it is more pleasant to labor in a field that promises at no distant season, an abundant harvest, than in one where



it seems nothing but briars and thorns can ever be produced, and where the very nature of the soil seems to defy all the skill and labor of the husbandman. But there are some disconsolate spirits, who will say that such seems to be the soil of India, and what I myself have written, gives no very flattering account of it. Still, I confess, my own prospects are sanguine, though I take but a very moderate view of what has been already effected. As yet the Missionary body in Northern India, has been in its infancy, much more than has generally been imagined, but is now rapidly attaining maturity in its plans, and the stedfastness of its efforts, as well as in qualifications for the work. In these letters, I have shown the exceedingly limited character of the efforts for many years, and the very imperfect nature of many things done; but these imperfections are in the course of gradual removal. The agents are every year increasing, and their adaptation to the work is daily becoming greater. A solid body of experienced men has now been formed, who understand the character of the people and the language, better than those who had the first efforts to make, most of whom were not permitted to labor so long as to attain by their own experience such knowledge, as has now become a sort of common stock among those who have survived, or come after them. The translations of books, tracts, &c., are all in the course of improvement; so that the weapons in our hands are becoming more effectual; and, through these, as

well as the experience derivable from others, the junior Brethren are enabled to enter on their work at a period, when their earlier predecessors had scarcely mastered the rudiments of the language. In consequence of this the disproportion between the numerical body and the actual laborers among the heathen, is now less than formerly, and is daily becoming less, while the increase of native assistants makes each Missionary worth two or three of those who had to labor without any such facilities as those now enjoyed.

Hitherto the Missionaries in this part of India have been like a few stragglers who have landed in an immense desert country, with a view to form a colony. Some have spent much time in exploring the country—others have tried to settle at various places, but have died before they could cut the jungle around to form a field; others have as yet been laboring in making tools for cutting the forest, but have not cut any of it themselves; while some have been too much enfeebled by the climate to be able to do any thing of consequence for the good of the colony. A still greater number from bad health and other causes, have returned to their native land; some with good and some with bad reports of the colony. Some of these say, the land is radically bad, and will never repay the efforts necessary to cultivate it: others, that the land is remarkably good, but that the forest is so dense and impenetrable, that it is next to impossible to bring it under cultivation; while not a few admit, that much difficulty exists, but that all

would soon be overcome, were a considerable body of hardy and industrious emigrants to go out and join the few already in the country. In the mean time a few of the earlier colonists, whom nothing could divert from their object, and who have lived long enough to be accustomed to the climate, and to acquire no small portion of the skill of back-wood-men, assisted by some of more recent arrival, have succeeded not only in cutting much of the forest at certain places, but in cultivating fields, and forming settlements, which, with proper care and persevering efforts, may become populous cities, surrounded by fertile and thriving districts.

Such I consider to be the present position and future prospects of the Missionary work in Northern India. In all the older and larger Missions the first grand difficulty has been overcome—that of forming the first lodgement—and nothing but neglect can now displace them. The nucleus of a Christian native community, though still defective in many respects, has been formed, like a small settlement in the depth of the primeval forest; and though vast labor and great perseverance are still required, if such labor and perseverance are brought into operation, there can be no doubt of the result. The older Missions, where a few experienced laborers are employed, are now making regular, though as yet slow progress, and if they were liberally supplied with suitable agents both Native and European, they would soon carry on their aggressive efforts among the heathen, on such a scale, as would in all human probability

produce great results. The second race of native Christians in some places is now growing up, with all the advantages of a good Christian education, which their parents did not enjoy. From this class, preachers, readers, and teachers of various kinds may be raised up, of a description far superior to those who are adult converts from the heathen. In this way the circle, at first small and obscurely marked, is gradually widening; and the influence which at first told on the neighbouring heathen population very feebly, becomes more and more powerful, and after a few years, may become perfectly irresistible. Great masses are difficult to move. Indian Society is a mass of the most dense and immoveable description. To move it at all, would seem to require the power of Omnipotence. It is not like the society of an island bounded by an ocean, within which all the opinions and prejudices are cooped up; so that when you have gone its length and breadth, and exposed its superstitions, and proclaimed a system of truth, you have no tide of adverse influence rolling in from the surrounding world, to overwhelm all your efforts, and drown them in a boundless ocean of corruption. In India, the influence of truth seems almost like a stone thrown into the midst of the Atlantic: you see the circles that play for a little distance on its surface, but they are soon rolled back and lost in the swell of the mighty billows that heave beneath. But though such is the appearance of Indian Society, and though the mighty power which it

opposes to the truth, can be but imperfectly conceived of, by those whose lot it has not been to struggle against it, yet it has been proved that it is not so invincible as it appears. The proud Brahmin has bowed his heart to the Gospel, and has sat down with the most despised of his countrymen, as well as with Christians from Europe, at the table of the Lord, and considered it his highest privilege on earth to be received as a Christian. There is not a caste or sect in India that has not paid tribute to the Gospel. Hinduism and Mohammedanism—all ranks, high and low, have yielded converts to Christianity: and though their numbers have been small, they are a proof, that not one of the boasted systems prevalent in India, is invincible. The converts are yet but as the first fruits; but we have clear indications, that, in many localities a great impression has been produced, and the people are beginning to receive the truth. Prejudices are giving way, and knowledge is spreading; and we have little doubt, that the calm, steady, and unflinching prosecution of our efforts, convincing the heathen that we are in perfect earnest, and will never abandon the field, till Christianity is fully established, will have a great effect in leading many who are in doubt to determine on leaving heathenism. At present, many would join the Christians, but see no Christian community to attract them. The doctrines they approve, but they do not see a body of people practising them. Hence the great value of a native Christian Church, exhibiting in every way

the character of its religion. A Missionary with an exemplary church, has many ways of acting on the people around, even though they may not attend the preaching, that the one who has no such church, does not possess; and when once this church becomes considerable, there is every likelihood of a rapid extension, if operations be vigorously pursued. In a few years there is every reason to hope, many of the present infant churches in different parts, will be considerable societies, from which, in concert with their orphan schools, &c., many useful agents may be raised to labor around. There is every prospect, that soon a large body of native laborers, will be formed; and as there are now a good many Europeans of some experience to guide and direct them, the ratio of success will likely be greatly increased. Difficulties are also in the course of being overcome with respect to the settlement and employment of the converts, so that though there are still great obstacles from this cause, in our way, especially at the newer stations, yet at the older, they are nearly overcome, and the churches are become pretty well fixed and regular communities, with their local influence daily increasing. The wider the community becomes, it presents the greater number of entrances for those who are without; and thus the farther we go on with our work, we find the difficulties lessening, as well as the facilities for overcoming them increasing.

The destruction of idolatry in India, and the establishment of Christianity, would be the greatest

event the world ever saw, since it would almost to a certainty ensure the conversion of most other countries in the East. It would be very foolish to affirm that we have the prospect of a speedy realization of our desires, with respect to it; but at the same time I have no hesitation in saying, that, unless we relax in our efforts, such a position has now been gained, that hundreds, and in a short time thousands, will every year be added to the number of Christian converts. In the older Missions of the South of India, where many facilities existed for carrying on the work, that do not exist in the North, and many obstacles were absent, which exerted all their force here; the progress has within the last few years been at a ratio that promises soon to bring almost the whole body of the people, as far as the field of the Missions extends, under Christian instruction; and also to, at least, a general profession of Christianity. Those Missions will, in all probability, in a few years have such an extensive hold on the native mind, and many native preachers of such unexceptionable character and qualifications brought to maturity, that comparatively little European aid will be absolutely required; though for the vigorous and rapid propagation of the Gospel, the more European agents can be supplied the better.

Though the natives at the older stations may be able to do much alone, yet the energy and superior knowledge of the Europeans give life to the system, just as the skill and bravery of European

officers, render the native armies of India more than a match for all the powers around them. The Missions in Bengal, and more particularly in Hindustan, are not yet so far advanced; but the former, especially about Calcutta, are fast approaching to such a state that they will be able to put in motion a large native agency, guided by a European body of much experience. The Calcutta Missionaries have had the great advantage of a large degree of concentration, and have profited much by each others experience; and though they are, from their position, comparatively little acquainted with those parts of India that are little affected by European ideas; they have, from a larger interchange of information and mutual example, a clearer idea of the plans best suited to their own localities, than most Missionaries in the country. These advantages have also been greatly promoted by the truly catholic and Christian union which has uninterruptedly prevailed among the Missionaries of all denominations in Calcutta.

In Hindustan, most of the Missions are of very recent origin, and have scarcely had time to take root. Those that are oldest, have been feebly carried on; and sometimes even suspended for a time, for want of supplies. For the last few years, the largest body of Missionaries in any one place, has been at Benares; where there have been two European Missions, with three Missionaries each, belonging to the Church and London Societies, together with some native assistants, and



one country-born Missionary, of the Serampore Society. These, however, with the exception of the last-mentioned, have been all juniors, though all are now able to preach with fluency, and are engaged in various other operations. The success at Benares has not as yet been great, though each Mission has had a few conversions; and there are now three small native churches, and several hundreds of children and youths, who have been baptized in our native boarding and orphan schools. From among these, we hope in a short time to be able to raise up useful teachers to spread the truth.

As to our prospects, they are not so good as those of some of our brethren; but perhaps better than those of many others. At such a citadel of idolatry, we have unusual difficulties to contend with; and a desperate struggle will undoubtedly be made, to defend the shrines of the gods: but even in Benares, Christianity has become one of the religions of the place. There are now in this city ten chapels, in which the Gospel is preached in the native language, besides out-door stations; and though these are small, compared with English places of worship, much wholesome truth emanates from them. Hinduism has been disturbed in this, its strongest fortress; and, in fact, begins already to shrink from the contest with a purer system. There are decided symptoms of misgiving in the minds of many: and the number of applications for baptism, though often from what

we know to be wrong motives, and must therefore reject them, evince, in some degree, that the odium of being a Christian is subsiding.

Though we have still a great and protracted contest before us, which, considering the immense field in which we are placed, we are far from being strong enough to go through with, we have every prospect of a final triumph, except we should be left alone in the struggle—one dropping away after another, before the victory is obtained. Indeed, in speaking of our prospects, I cannot help every moment feeling, that almost every thing depends on our being largely and promptly supported by new reinforcements. If left alone, in a few years our heads may be in the dust, when all the advantages we have gained will be lost, and the work will have to begin anew. We are like a small party of a besieging army that has effected a much desired lodgement in the outworks of the enemy's fortress, which must lead to its subjugation, if successfully maintained; but unless the most vigorous efforts are made to support it by the rest of the army, it will perish in the attempt, without any ultimate advantage. We have planted the banner of the cross on the walls of the enemy. Some of our dearest companions have fallen in the attack; and we are too weak to complete the conquest, except other hands of Christian warriors advance to second our efforts; and not only fill the places of the fallen and wounded, but crowd the ranks of the assailants, till the enemy is entirely subdued.

Taking an extensive view of the work in all its bearings, as to its past history and present state—recollecting all that has been endured, and all that has been overcome—its incipient struggle when opposed by all the powers that be; and its slow but firm advance amidst thousands of difficulties, till it now has come to a comparative degree of maturity in its plans and means of operation, though there are yet many unsuccessful laborers and fruitless fields, I feel assured, that in a short time, far greater success of a direct nature will attend it.

The tide of Christian influence, notwithstanding all the barriers by which it is retarded in its onward course, has decidedly set in. Its movements are as yet but slow and imperfectly discerned; but its strength is increasing as it flows on, and will perhaps even sooner than we expect, gain such force as to carry every thing before it. If in India nothing like the rapid progress of the Gospel in the South Seas has been manifested, the advance towards such a state of things we have reason to believe has commenced,—much preparation has taken place; and there is reason to hope, that, before long, conversions on a similar scale, especially at the older stations, may be witnessed; and when once such things begin in India, who can say what may be the vastness of the results? Let once the millions of minds in India be moved by that great influence which has taken possession of the smaller communities in the islands of the South, and who will calculate the extent of the revolution, that even a few years would produce?

For some such revolution, I *do* look in this country. It may be sooner than most of us dare to hope; or it may be delayed longer than we wish, and even expect: but that the slow, sure, and almost imperceptible change now going forward in the moral sentiments and religious feelings of thousands, derived from preaching, education, conversation, example, and other sources, will at last burst out in some great apostacy from Hinduism, and an extensive reception of Christianity, either in reality or in form, seems almost beyond the possibility of doubt. Such a result seems just what the history of other countries would lead us to expect. The greatness of the intellectual mass to be acted upon in India, and the unusual difficulties in the way, naturally put off the result longer, than judging from smaller countries (and no country so large as India has hitherto been brought to the test) we should have anticipated: but let us enlarge our means, and persevere undismayed; and what the word of God has accomplished in other lands, will be effected here. Though long and dark has been the night of India, the streaks of dawn have begun to appear on her horizon; and the Sun of righteousness will soon arise in all his glory, and pour his gladdening beams over the wide extent of her fertile plains, the teeming millions of which, will rejoice in his heavenly light.

One does not require to be a visionary, in order to form bright hopes respecting India. If he is only a man of the world, he will see causes of

hope and joy, when he beholds her wide regions brought under the mild rule of the greatest and most civilized nation of the world—the wisest and most philanthropic men laboring to bless her with just and equal laws; to extend to her the benefit of science and learning; and to develop her boundless resources of wealth, that commerce and civilization may spread their influence among her vast population. But if he is a Christian, while he rejoices in these as temporal good, he will rejoice still more to see the Gospel, along with these benefits, working its way through all difficulties, and its influence yearly increasing; while, in the future, judging from the analogy of other lands, he beholds it breaking forth with resistless power; and, in conjunction with science and civilization, overturning all the immoral systems of idolatry, and shedding its pure and holy influence over the hearts and lives of the hundred millions of this immense country.

Let there be prayerful perseverance in Missionary operations, constantly enlarging as the Church has means, and improving our plans as experience directs, or new circumstances may require; and India, instead of presenting a discouraging field, will soon be one of the most attractive, as it now is from its extent the most interesting. Difficulties are daily giving way, and we are seeing the path to success continually improving. It is to be hoped, that no ground gained will again be lost; but that every year will show a decided advance. The extent of co-operation with the laborers in

this work, which now characterizes European society in India, is one of the most pleasing features of the times. Even were the European Societies to withdraw from the cause, the country would still have the benefit of a considerable portion of Missionary labor; and though such an event would be a dreadful stroke to the cause, yet it is most cheering to think, that the Gospel is really so far planted in India, that even then it would continue to grow, though not so rapidly. I shall not dwell longer on this subject, since what has been said will show, that, with the fullest sense of the great difficulties still before us, and the fullest conviction that as yet our success has not been so great as we perhaps once hoped for, our prospects for the future are highly encouraging.

At an earlier period, when we had not grappled with one-tenth of the difficulties with which we are now familiar from painful experience, we may have indulged in even as sanguine hopes as now, but we had not then the data on which we can now reason. We have felt the full force of the obstacles opposed to us, and have seen many of them overcome; and we can calculate much better the means requisite to overcome the rest. Thus, while we know that without Divine grace these means will not answer our expectations, yet assured, that to the believing use of Scriptural means, grace will not be denied, we feel a perfect confidence that success will be the result in a far greater degree than has yet taken place. God has been with his servants in this country already;

and though he has been pleased to try them much, he has, notwithstanding, enabled them to get over difficulties that once seemed to them entirely insurmountable. Though faith and patience may yet be much tried, and many a strenuous effort must be made, yet he has given the sure and certain prospect, that through their instrumentality, India will at no distant period, be given to his Son "for an inheritance."

Yours, &c.

W. B.

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## LETTER XIX.

### EXTENT OF THE FIELD YET UNOCCUPIED.

DEAR FRIEND,

It is, no doubt, a common idea among Christians at home, that India is now pretty fully occupied by the Missionary body; and that though success has not been very great, and the villages may not be supplied with the means of grace, yet that there are preachers of the Gospel in most of the towns or places of importance. This idea leads them to form high expectations, that after a period of perhaps not many years, India may, like a second Tahiti, suddenly cast away her gods, and profess the name of Christ. Would that it were so! I myself believe, that were India as fully oc-

cupied by pious Missionaries as Tahiti was for years before its conversion, I might yet live to see the last fragment of Hinduism disappear : but alas ! the disproportion between the means and the end is still so great, and the field not occupied at all is still so vast compared with the little that is partially so, that there is no room to form such expectations, without expecting what would be very much beyond the usual operations of Divine Providence.

It is true, that the Spirit of God might be so poured out on the minds of men, that even from the seed already sown, a great deal of fruit might spring up with a rapidity surpassing our comprehension. Thousands of pious converts might start, as it were at once, into existence, and carry the Word over every district, with the Holy Ghost accompanying, so that nations might be born to God in a day. But, though such a state of things is what we long and pray for, our usual experience does not in general warrant us to positively expect it, while many means are still in our power, that have not been employed. The number of conversions in India is every year increasing, but not in such a ratio as gives any great hopes of an immediate spread of the Gospel over the whole country, by means of native agency ; and a review of the length and breadth of India, and the ground not yet brought under Missionary culture at all, will show at once, that unless vastly greater efforts are made, the expectations of universal movements are not founded on a very sure basis, though they



may, no doubt, be in some measure realized by a rapid extension of operations. In order to lead to an accurate estimate of the claims of India, I shall in this letter take a geographical survey of the country; giving a general, though not professedly complete, view of the places occupied by Missions, and the tracts of country between them still destitute, even of the means of hearing the Gospel. In doing this, I shall begin at Cape Comorin, the most southern point, and trace the sites of different Missions, till we reach the northern barrier, formed by the Himalayas. The most southern districts of India—those of Tinnevely and Travancore, have been better supplied with suitable and successful laborers, than any other part of India: but still, even in those districts, the proportion of laborers to the work to be performed, is small and inadequate. Such a foundation, however, seems to have been laid in these parts; and the numbers that annually come over from idolatry to the profession of Christianity, is so considerable, that it does seem, that if operations are carried on, and enlarged for a few years, a revolution of religious sentiments may be expected on a very great scale. Large districts, however, even in this favored part of India, are utterly destitute; but it is pleasing to see that the native teachers are gradually pushing their way farther and farther among the heathen community on every side. The districts to the North of Travancore on the West, are almost entirely destitute, with the exception of the Quilon Mission, and one of the Church Society;

the latter engaged principally, I believe, in the important work of trying to revive the ancient Syrian Church. This interesting people have alas, preserved little more than the Christian name: but it is still hoped, their priests may, under the means now employed, become useful; and that this venerable church may yet become a blessing to Southern India.

To the North of Tinnevely, towards the Eastern Coast, are the old Missions of the Propagation Society, in rather a decayed state, as to spirit and activity; but it is hoped, now improving. Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Tranquebar, &c. are stations celebrated, by being the scenes of the devoted labors of Zeigenbalg, Grundler, Schwartz, and others, whose names are dear to the friends of Missions, as the first who carried the pure Gospel to the shores of India, where they planted it amidst toils and difficulties of no ordinary kind. They rest from their labors; and though the supineness of the church suffered much of the seed they dispersed, to perish for want of cultivation, what they sowed has not been entirely lost, and will yet strike deeper and deeper root. These Missions, be it remembered, though considerably ramified, by no means fill up the ground, even in their own neighbourhood; and large spaces of populous country on every side, are entirely uncared for. If such be the case in this most favored corner of India, longest accustomed to the sound of the Gospel, what must be the state of the rest!

If a line is drawn on the map from Madras,

by Bangalore in the Mysore country, to the sea on the Malabar Coast, an important division of the Missionary field will be found. To the South, besides the leading Missions already noticed, several smaller ones will be found, and a large body of professed Christians, of one kind or another, including Roman Catholics and Syrians; so that south of this line, it may be said, Christianity, in one form or other, has obtained a considerable footing, though immense multitudes have perhaps scarcely heard of it; and many large districts have no means of doing so. This southern part, however, it must be admitted, forms the most encouraging field; though as to our ultimate views upon all India, it is not so important as the north. If all the societies who have stations south of this line, keep steadily supplying and enlarging their most encouraging Missions, great and cheering events may be expected; for there the battle has been fought, and Christianity has acquired an actual territory on the Indian soil. While my own more immediate sphere is one widely different, where many a hard struggle is yet to be endured, so that I may be suspected of wishing to enlist all in its favor, I would say by all means, let no exertion be spared to carry on the work at those stations, where such a footing has been obtained; that from them the waves of Christian influence may roll towards the other parts of the vast regions to the north.

On the north side of the line I have mentioned, the Mission stations are few, feeble, and far scat-

tered. In the Northern districts of the Madras presidency, there are no large stations or bodies of Missionaries. Bellary, Chittoor, Cudapah, Vizagapatam, and Belgaum, of our Society, form nearly the whole amount; and some of these have only a single Missionary, while hundreds of miles intervene between the different stations. All these spaces are filled up with hundreds of towns, requiring Missionaries, schools, &c. and are fully open for their reception; but none are found to supply them. A Mission of the Basle Society, likely soon to be of considerable strength, has been formed in the Concan, on the West Coast; but, after all, the whole of this northern section of the Madras presidency, presents a very gloomy and neglected aspect, compared with the south, but not more, nor even so much so, as the rest of India.

On going northward, into the Bombay presidency, on the western side, we find the Missions of the Scotch Church, the American Board, the Church and London Societies, at Poona, Ahmednagar, Nasik, Bombay, Surat, &c.; but these are only isolated laborers, scattered over an immense territory; one-hundredth part of which they cannot possibly reach, even by an occasional visit. The Missions are also nearly all of recent origin; and have not as yet any thing like a tolerable body of native assistants. So that almost all the Marhatta districts are in a state of awful destitution.

The north-east parts of the Madras country, including many very fertile and populous districts,

have scarcely had any thing done for them. Hinduism is left perfectly undisturbed; and over hundreds of miles of British territory, the foot of a preacher of the Gospel has never trod. In all the wide extended territories of central India, several thousands of miles in circumference, there are no Missionaries. Large and flourishing cities, towns, and rural districts, are equally 'destitute. From Benares to the nearest Mission station on the Madras side, are at least, 1000 miles; and perhaps nearly the same to the nearest Bombay station: so that whole kingdoms, open to the Gospel, are left without a single preacher. The cities of Hyderabad, Nagpore, Gwalior, Jubbulpore, Sagor, and hundreds of other cities and large towns, are without a single one to point their superstitious population to the Gospel of Christ.

We may now survey the state of the presidencies of Bengal and Agra. Calcutta, the capital of the former, and of all the British empire in the east, has the largest body of Missionaries of any place in India. There are Missions of all the denominations in the country; but the whole number is not above thirty, though perhaps the circuit of their labors embraces a population of much more than a million of heathen. Here there is still a great field for enlarged effort, and much promise of success.

As I have already referred to most of the Missions in this part of India it is more my object here to notice the spaces still unoccupied, than those that are. In the lower or Bengal country,

there are more laborers than in the upper; but they are a mere nothing compared with the people. Here, as in other places, large and populous districts have not one Missionary, while not one single station has a supply commensurate with its wants. In coming out of Bengal by the road to Benares, there is not a single Mission for nearly three hundred miles; viz. from Bengal to Benares itself. In fact, there is not a single one in the country, on the south-east of Benares, till we reach Bancura and Burdwan, in Bengal. The whole of South Behar is destitute. On going up the Ganges, no Mission exists on the river between Berhampore in Bengal, and Monghyr in Hindustan, a distance of more than one hundred miles. On the north side of the river, including all the fertile districts of Tirhoot, &c. there is not a single station. From Monghyr to Patna and Dynapore, there is no other station: and from thence to Benares, not a second. Thus, in more than four hundred miles of the most frequented rout of Europeans, and in an uninterruptedly cultivated and populous country, there are only two Missionary stations; and not one inland, save the Church Mission station at Goruckpore, more than a hundred miles north-east from Benares.

Benares is occupied as the most important place in the country; but by no means as it should be, considering its position and character. Chunar, eighteen miles from Benares, has one laborer; as has also Mirzapore, a large, populous, and thriving city, about thirty miles distant. The next is

Allahabad, about eighty miles hence; at which the American Presbyterian Society has recently begun a Mission. In all the immense tract of country, called the Duab, lying between the Jumna and the Ganges, as well as in all the countries of Oude, Nepal, and Rohil-cund, to the east of the Ganges, and all the Bundel-cund districts, to the west of the Jumna, and the classical territories of Muthra, Bindrabun, &c. there is no Mission existing, save a recently-formed one at Agra, where there is one Missionary, and also a catechist of the Church Society at Meerut. Towards Lahore, and in the most north-western part of the British dominions, the Americans have recently formed two Missions; one at Ludiana, and the other at Saharnpore; but between these and any other to the eastward, lie all the provinces of Delhi and Agra quite neglected; and beyond them, all the kingdom of Runjeet Singh, in the Punjab and Cashmere, and all the mountain tribes of the Himalaya, for whom nothing has yet been done. It would take volumes to describe properly the countries and nations which we have thus glanced at. Thousands of miles of populous country are thus, after all that has been done for India, left in heathen darkness, with not a single messenger of peace to point them to the light of God! When can it be expected, that the small scattered band of men now seeking to evangelize India, will be able to pour over its immense idolatrous regions, such a flood of influence as might sweep away the vast superstitious accumulations of thousands of

years, and the productions of millions of minds perverted by the prince of darkness? With man, it is impossible, but not so with God; though we have never seen that it is his plan to enable his people to conquer so great territories as India, with means so few as those yet employed.

One great peculiarity of the whole of these vast territories of India, is, that they are all perfectly open to the Gospel, as far as political circumstances can make them. The Government of British India, though pledged to the general policy of non-interference with the religion of the natives, gives the most ample protection to Missionaries of all denominations, in the peaceable prosecution of their great object, the conversion of the heathen; and though there are points in the extent of the government connexion with the superstitions of the country, and as it respects the educational system at present adopted, which most of us disapprove, all must feel the value of the free toleration and liberal protection which we enjoy. We do not want a government to step in, and so to encourage conversion, as to draw towards Christianity all the servile and hypocritical hunters for place and pension. This would do ten times more harm than good. Governments have the means of making hypocrites in abundance, but none of making real Christians, such as we wish the natives to become; and it is well, that in a country like India, where the people are almost universally destitute of every principle of truth and honor, the government does not openly espouse the cause,



else the church would soon be deluged with nominal converts, as ignorant, and even more immoral, than the heathen. India is open to the Gospel in the fullest sense of the word. Every town and village may be entered by the Messenger of the Cross : and instead of policemen, with warrants, to hinder him from delivering his message, he will find his person as securely protected by the civil power, as in any part of Britain ; and every facility, short of actual co-operation, given to him in carrying on his work. From natives of all ranks, either in or out of authority, the utmost civility is almost universally experienced ; provided, of course, that his own bearing and language are becoming and courteous. Personal insults are rarely ever met with in propagating the Gospel in India, especially among the Hindoos, unless where there has been some undue acerbity allowed to mingle with religious discussions ; and that such should be the case at times, is only what might be expected, where creeds are so different. Such insults, however, are nothing to what many good men have experienced, and even now do experience, in preaching in neglected parts of England ; and though the itinerant English preachers, may have many things much more encouraging to his feelings, than the Missionary in India, yet the latter meets with more civility and personal respect, in almost every place where he goes. This, no doubt, arises to a great extent, from the elevated position of the English, as rulers of the country ; but it is also, in some degree, owing to the man-

ners of the people; for I have often observed with pleasure, that a respectable native preacher is treated well in general by his countrymen; and though they will use at times more uncivil words in attacking his religion, than they would employ towards an European; yet they generally conduct themselves with much courteousness, and sometimes show him much outward respect. There is no need for carrying on our work in India, in an under-hand or private manner, but every thing is open to the face of day. Every public place, where men congregate either for business, religious observances, or pleasure, may be resorted to, and the crowds frequenting them may be addressed on the truths of the Gospel.

Almost always a number will give him a favorable reception; and, in general, the feeling among the people seems to be, that the Missionaries are their friends and well wishers, even where there is no apparent inclination to receive the doctrines of Christianity. Such being the case, Missionaries might be stationed in every town and village in the country, and meet with abundant spheres for labor. No limits indeed can be set to the requirements of India for Missionaries, till such time as the state of Christianity be so matured, that a native ministry may supersede the use of foreign aid.

Were all the Missionary efforts of Christendom to be turned towards India, the supply would by no means meet the full demand of such wide and populous regions as are entirely open to the

Gospel—and where Christianity may be spread by all legitimate means under the protection of an enlightened and paternal government.

It has always a partial and invidious appearance to attempt to turn the tide of benevolent attention from one object, or one country to another. No one whose feelings are truly Christian, could wish to see a single spot of the earth, where the standard of the Cross has once been erected, abandoned, even though success did not seem to follow speedily. Still, however, fields are not all equally inviting, nor are the means of reaching them at all times the same, and in every undertaking it would seem to be a most natural course, to devote our efforts to the best field at present open, trusting to Providence, that before we are prepared for enlarging our plans, others will be equally open for our reception.

These reflections are naturally suggested by the relative position of India and China, the former entirely open and the other as entirely shut. A considerable attempt has been made to turn the principal sympathies and efforts of the churches towards China, and a good deal has been said and written on the subject, by those excellent brethren who labor in that part of the world; but I confess it does not seem to me that any case has been made out, to justify an immediate diversion of our strength from the lands more accessible, to the Chinese territories, which after all that has been brought forward, are undeniably shut against all attempts to settle our Missionaries within them.

The plan of keeping up our Missions at Malacca, Singapore and Batavia, &c., in an efficient state, seems to be all that can now be done with prudence, so long as we have not reached one thousandth part of the people in India. At these stations, a great deal of preliminary work may be done, and a body of native Chinese preachers raised; that, as soon as, in the course of Providence, China is thrown open to our public and permanent entrance, we may be able to pour in well qualified men and suitable books from those places occupied as depôts.

A good deal of stress has been laid by some, on the fact that several Missionaries have gone along the coasts and given away tracts and books, that have been received with avidity. All this I hold as very little indeed, since most of the books so lavishly given away, are only taken in all probability in China, as well as in India, for the mere value put on the paper. The Chinese are I should think, perhaps a more reading people than the Hindoos, but still I should doubt the soundness of any hopes of considerable good, till the living teacher can go along with the books and expound and enforce them. In India very few instances of conversion merely by means of books have taken place; and in almost every case where the perusal of a Bible or tract has been effectual, it has been principally in leading the person to enquire after, and come to the living teacher for instruction. Thrown away at random among crowds of idlers, along a coast where the distributor must be off in

a few hours at most, and can give scarcely any explanation of his doctrines, it is not likely that much good can be done by them. In India we generally give away our tracts with much caution, selecting the most promising applicants, and ascertaining as far as we can, the motive of the person, and the probability of his reading it, but after all we find that many are merely cast away—and though the people all know where we are to be found, if they wish to make enquiries, how few of the thousands who get our tracts ever seek after the truth ! Where there are no living teachers—no Christian churches—no existing Christianity—nothing in short but a book or two, which taken alone, generally are but very imperfectly comprehended by the heathen readers, very little good has ever been heard of. I do not mean to say that by such means a soul has never been converted, but certainly by such means no country under the sun was ever evangelized ; and I do not believe that any thing worthy of the time and expense can be done, till the actual preacher goes among the people with the means and opportunity, of not only preaching, but of giving Christianity a living form, by gathering churches from among the heathen, and teaching them the precepts and ordinances of Christ.

But why all this haste to get into China ? Could we get in to-morrow, what would be the use of it, but that of scattering our efforts, (already too much disarranged by extension) over a greater space, and consequently a more general

enfeebling of their power. Have we yet a single man to send to China, whom we could not give as good a field in the provinces of British India? Are not there more than ten thousand stations open to us in the British Empire, which we shall not be able to occupy for years, and why should we pass by these, and stand wringing our hands, looking at the impassable wall of Chinese policy, when it will take us a thousand times more effort than has yet been put forth, to reap the fields, already ripe for the harvest. China will doubtless be open long before we are in any way prepared to enter it. Through the mountains of Assam, and the passes of the Eastern Himalayas, the British territories are rapidly stretching towards the Chinese frontier. Burma, Siam, Nepal, &c., in a few years will in all probability be provinces of our gigantic Empire. China already dreads being our nearest neighbour, and perhaps some day, while many may be wondering when the Gospel will be able to penetrate into China, a few rounds from the Bengal artillery, or a charge of Sepoy bayonets, may have levelled for ever her boasted greatness, and laid all her provinces as open to our Missions as the plains of Hindustan!

But in the mean time, India is our most open field, and we should let no vain search after better regions tempt us aside, till we have done that for it at least, that will secure its ultimate and not distant conversion to God. It is true it is a difficult field, compared with some others already

cultivated, but this arises not perhaps, more from the natural sterility of the soil, than from the greatness of its extent, and the fewness and feebleness of the laborers employed. Let these be increased and encouraged, and the aspect of things in a few years may be greatly improved.

But if India is difficult and discouraging, China is not likely to be much less so, and we should not encumber ourselves with too many difficulties at once, but firmly grapple with one set of them, and then turn all our best energies on the others.

It was a favorite part of Napoleon's tactics, to attack one division of his enemies with his whole force at once, and thus secure certain victory, and then immediately turn with the greatest rapidity on the other, thus defeating them in detail, and obtaining a speedy end of the campaign. Hindoo idolatry is now the enemy with which we are chiefly engaged in the East, and for the defeat of which we have a clear and favorable field—let us pour the main strength of the Christian army upon it—success will be certain, and with India subdued, we may advance on China as soon as it opens, with such advantages as will, under the divine blessing, secure success.

Yours, &c.

W. B.

## LETTER XX.

## CLAIMS OF INDIA FOR MORE LABORERS.

DEAR FRIEND,

The foregoing letters will present the Missionary work in India to your mind, in various lights and shades, as an undertaking of vast and varied labor with overwhelming difficulty, but cheering prospects. We are like a beleaguering army, that as yet has been only skirmishing around the walls of a mighty fortress, who have just succeeded in taking a few stragglers as prisoners, and have begun to open some of their batteries to breach the walls; but who know well that many more arduous struggles must be endured, and that many a hero must fall, before the enemy's citadel is taken, while at the same time they are perfectly confident in their ultimate success. We are now prepared for the most vigorous measures, and the field of exertion is perfectly open. We therefore call loudly for reinforcements of every description. Men and funds for carrying on the work should now be poured into the country on every side, and prayer and supplications made that the Holy Spirit may be poured out in the most abundant manner, to grant success to the means employed. To keep pace with the demands of India may be almost impossible, but I have little doubt that if the churches of Europe and America would enter on



the work on a far more extensive scale, and with far more zeal and devotion than ever they have yet done, before thirty or forty years Christianity will be on a such a footing in India, that even if foreign aid were withdrawn, it may not only keep its ground, but make rapid progress. The first struggle—the most arduous of all—is now going forward, but when that is once over, the Gospel will break forth and conquer on every side.

But to bring the question of India's conversion to a quick and decisive issue, the most prompt and energetic movements should be made to strengthen every post, and to furnish every sort of means for making aggressive efforts on a scale of greater extent, and greater efficiency, than has yet been reached. Enlarged plans would enable things to reach a greater degree of maturity and permanency, so that while we should have more direct Missionary work, our native churches would have much higher advantages from the increased number of pastors, and teachers. Of the qualifications of those who should be sent out, it is almost superfluous for me to say any thing more particular, since the nature of the work to be accomplished, and the great variety of means to be employed, to which I have adverted in these letters, if duly considered, will naturally point out the sort of men required—men of ardent, deep, and well grounded piety are necessary. Sentimental men will scarcely bear the rough tear and wear of the work. Missionary work in the eyes of many young men at home, is a fine glowing and attrac-

tive object; but close at hand there is little, but hard matter-of-fact labor, frequent and trying discouragements, and painful disappointments. The imagination has little to employ itself on, unless an occasional glimpse into the future, all around is rugged and trying, and with little to console or to gratify. Those whose minds are light and fluttering, dependent on excitements of an external nature to keep up their pious feelings, and urge them to exertion, though they may not generally be deficient in piety, when its flame is fanned by surrounding influences, are not exactly the men who are suited to the long and patience-trying efforts and endurances of the Missionary field. The piety of a laborer among the heathen would require to be a deep and intelligent principle, fixed in the judgment, and acting powerfully on the feelings and affections, and thus producing ardent and persevering zeal; and not a mere matter of feeling, which might droop and die when all fostering aids from without have been withdrawn. Missionary work is not so favorable to the cultivation of piety, as that of the pastor who labors among a Christian people, and whose mind comes more into contact with sanctifying influences, and is less exposed to the chilling blasts of the world. The one labors among those who hear the word gladly, and who join in the holy services of the sanctuary, and many of them unite with him in "lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting;" while the Missionary is but too often called on to speak the word with stammering lips, and

half-despairing heart, amidst those who contradict and blaspheme.

The Missionary in India, has not often very great temporal privations to bear, but such as might happen to him at home, but his spiritual privations are of no ordinary kind, and would require to be met by no ordinary strength of religious principle. I will not say that any of us would have been more devout men than we are, had we staid in Britain; but I believe all my Brethren will join in saying, that we have felt more the debilitating influence of the moral climate of India on our souls, than we have felt that of its natural climate on our bodies, and that it takes more spiritual strength to bear up against the former, than bodily strength to sustain the latter. Men weak in the faith, or of easily affected minds, should not, therefore, be called to go to India: but such men should be sought for as have a strong, healthy and cheerful piety, founded on clear Scriptural principles. Such men can be expected to wear and to work on through all difficulties.

As to talents, it is obvious they ought to be good, as men of inferior talent can be got in the country for secondary kinds of labor, and the men who are most wanted from home, are such as after a few years of experience may gradually become the directors and leaders of the native agency, the proper qualifying and guidance of which will no doubt ultimately form a very large portion of the peculiar work of the European Missionaries. It

would be easy to say much on the sorts of talent required for particular departments of the work, but I conceive this to be of little use. Let the men selected be good preachers, of sound judgment, amiable temper, suitable education and biblical knowledge, and in such a class of men, experience in the work will no doubt develop all the other varieties of talent requisite for the different kinds of Missionary labor. To be a good preacher should be made a *sine qua non* with every Missionary candidate. Preaching is the peculiar work of a Missionary. All the other important branches of labor come in as mere adjuncts, and may be performed at times, and seasons when he cannot preach. A separate class of men from the preaching laborers, does not seem to me to be required, and if required at all, they are generally to be found more or less in India; or the peculiar work in which they might be employed, may be done as well by those who make preaching the Gospel their chief work, as far as strength admits of their doing so. Those who are sent out ought to be as young as it is possible to find them, with characters and talents sufficiently matured and education sufficiently advanced. This affords great advantages for learning the language and acquiring due experience for a good period of labor before the prime of life passes over; and also giving a far greater probability of a ready assimilation to the climate, than if they were older. I shall not dwell longer on the qualifications of the men we require, as these are now

pretty generally acknowledged, but shall make some remarks before I close, on the claims of India for more laborers.

There is one suggestion, however, which I wish to offer for the consideration of the Directors of Societies, which is this: I think they ought to have a list made out of all young ministers within the range of their knowledge, of undoubted piety and talents, and approved by several years labor. When they want a Missionary for any given station and have not one of their own students ready or suitable, let them select one from the list of young pastors, and send him a call to the place, with such reasons, or explanations as they may deem proper, on the same principle on which a church acts in calling a minister from another charge to become their pastor. Should the first not accept the call, it might be offered to another, and so on till the list of young men believed to be suitable is gone over. In this way I think vacancies in the Missionary field might often be filled up, especially such as require only English, as in the West Indies, and this would leave more of the other candidates at liberty to be sent to the East. I think it would be found that a particular call from the Directors, would often determine a young man whose heart is in the work; as it would be a testimony to his own mind, respecting his fitness, from those best qualified to judge. There are no doubt many suitable young men to whom such a call would present a better sphere of usefulness than they find in their own churches, and as

those who are from various causes obliged to leave the Missionary ranks, are yearly becoming pastors of churches, it is but fair that their places should be supplied from the ranks of the younger pastors. For such men as Townley, Hill and Keene, and many other valued brethren that could be named, we are surely entitled to some return; yet I know of only two brethren in India, who were for a short time pastors in England. For every returned Missionary who takes a church in England, and many must do so, the Directors ought to call a young minister to fill his place.

India now presents a boundless field of labor, and every young man should consider in entering on the ministry, whether or not he is called to enter on it; and every Society should consider if they have done their duty to the world, so long as thousands of large cities, towns and villages, are entirely destitute in a land fully open to their efforts. It is true we do not require from home so many men as would be adequate to the complete evangelization of India. The natives themselves will no doubt evangelize their own country much easier than we can do; but let us set to the work in earnest, and lay such a foundation as they will be able to build on at once. Devise liberal things, and in the end they will be found to be most economical. To send a force so strong as to ensure at once the discomfiture of an enemy is always in the end the best, since it prevents unnecessary waste either of blood or the munitions of war. Now that there can be no serious diffi-

culty in occupying every important place in India, with such bodies of Missionaries as in a few years, with the Divine blessing might lay the foundation of Christian Churches with a native ministry, every effort should be made to produce a universal extension of our plans and operations. If, instead of sending out to India twos and threes, our Society were to make one grand effort to send out some fifty or sixty at once, to distribute over all their stations where some foundation has been laid, and where the building, were there workmen, might go on with rapidity, I have no doubt, but in a few years such a measure would tell with amazing power on the progress of the Gospel. All around the older stations there are suitable places to form new ones, so that by diverging from where we have already done something, we might gradually, as our numbers of efficient men, whether European or native, increased, so spread over the country, as more or less to embrace its immense population within the range of our operations. In no other country has God presented to us such a splendid sphere for demonstrating the true character of Christianity, as the power and wisdom of God for salvation, as in India. Other lands may have great claims, but this is the *greatest land* in the world; open to every effort of Christian philanthropy. We have not here the task-master or slave driver, to step in between men and the Gospel, nor a tyrannical government to oppose the improvement of the people; but a people enjoying the utmost domestic

freedom even in a state of moral degradation, and a government composed of the most honourable men, most of whom are not only favorable to the advancement of civilization, but would rejoice to see the peaceful progress of the Gospel overturn every superstition in the country. Should Christians not unite to extend the Gospel in India now, when can they enjoy a more favorable opportunity? If we neglect a duty which Providence has given us the time and means of performing, can we expect that it will be less difficult at any future period? Every one who can either personally or indirectly do any thing for India's salvation, should do it now. God forbid that her political horizon should ever be darkened, or that the empire of Britain over her should ever cease, till she has received from the ruling country, all the blessings of Gospel light and civilization. But the history of nations is often mysterious; and if we are found neglectful of our trust in India, who can tell the result? Was it for nothing that the most splendid empire in the world was given to the Christian people of a little Western Island of the sea? Why was Britain chosen for this purpose in spite of all the machinations of kings and statesmen, and even in spite of herself? When her wisest men opposed her obtaining an inch of independent dominion in the East, why was it that by the most wonderful train of events, province after province, and kingdom after kingdom were thrown into her hands? And why is it that even now in some way or other, the frontiers of her wide dominions are



yearly extending, so that no one can tell where their limits will stop? Kingdoms a few years ago scarcely heard of by Britons, are now provinces of our sovereign. Can we have any doubt of the purpose of all these wonderful events, when we remember that these vast regions are thus thrown by an all-wise Providence into the hands of the only nation that possesses the means adequate to Christianize and civilize them? Let this great work, therefore, be considered the sacred office of Britain. To it let her pious youth consecrate all their energies; her old men their influence and wisdom; her rich men their wealth, and her poor their savings.

Let the British Churches not rest till the work has been accomplished, and India shines as a bright jewel in the Redeemer's crown. Remember it is a great and arduous work. It cannot be done if lightly taken up. Effort upon effort; attack upon attack must be made before Satan will resign the richest domain of his kingdom. Every inch of ground will be disputed by the powers of darkness, but if the Church does her part the conquest is certain. Of the blessing of God we are sure, so soon as his people enter as they ought into the work; and perhaps the only reason we have not succeeded better, has been that our efforts were too insignificant, to be pleasing to God when he had in his providence called us to perform such a work.

But let efforts be made for India, to the utmost of the ability of the church, and the Spirit will not

be withheld. There can be no doubt of the result. Let all, therefore, with ten-fold energy set to the work ; and the day will soon come, when over the wide dominions of Britain in the East, there shall be but one Lord, and his name One ; when the impure worship of Hinduism shall have ceased to exist, and the followers of the false prophet shall humbly bow their knees at the name of Jesus.

Yours sincerely,

W. B.

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